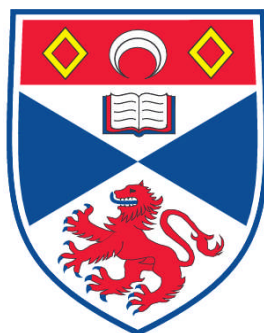


**THE *PRONUNCIAMIENTO* IN YUCATÁN:
FROM INDEPENDENCE TO INDEPENDENCE
(1821-1840)**

Shara Ali

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St. Andrews**



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Shara Ali

Thesis submitted for the Degree of Ph.D.

University of St. Andrews

September 2010

I, Shara Ali, hereby certify that this thesis, which is approximately 86,500 words in length, has been written by me, that it is the record of work carried out by me and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree.

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Abstract

Unique to nineteenth-century Spain and Central America, the *pronunciamiento* can be interpreted as an act of insubordination against ruling authorities, which included a written document with a list of complaints or demands. The practice was almost always carried out by members of the army, but usually involved heavy participation by political and civilian sectors of society as well. The *pronunciamiento* more often than not contained a threat of military violence if the grievances of the *pronunciados* were not listened to; as a result, it carried with it the implicit consequence of armed revolt.

The *pronunciamiento* was responsible for major political changes in early nineteenth-century Mexico and Yucatán, and was also one of the most powerful forces of political and societal destabilisation during this period. Indeed, the *pronunciamiento* was responsible for the establishment of federalist and centralist systems, changes of constitutions, and constant overthrows of presidents. This was also true on a smaller scale in Yucatán, as the *pronunciamiento* was not only used to depose governors and administrations, but was the key negotiatory mechanism between the Yucatecan and Mexican administrations; *yucatecos* resorted to the *pronunciamiento* to realise their secessions from and reunifications to Mexico throughout the early nineteenth century.

The aim of this thesis is to expose the dynamic of the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento*. It will challenge the present depiction of the *pronunciamiento* as military exercise of destabilization, and will instead concentrate on exposing it as a highly intricate process of political representation and negotiation, at both local and national levels. This will not only contribute toward a greater understanding of *pronunciamiento* culture on a local and more general scale, but will also reveal a more comprehensive analysis of the socio-political and economic circumstances of nineteenth-century Yucatán. This in turn will aid in re-defining early nineteenth-century Mexico, questioning its traditional depiction as an age of “chaos”,

and instead exposing it as one dominated by political and ideological forces and factions, who used the *pronunciamiento* to express their beliefs and to negotiate for change.

Introduction

The early independent years of nineteenth-century Mexico (from independence in 1821 to the beginning of the Porfirio Díaz administration in 1876) were plagued by instability, factionalism, civil conflict, insurrections, and wars, as powerful sectors of society in Mexico City along with those of its regions struggled with the novelties of self-governance, the definition of their political identities, and the understanding and formation of the political system of the nation. Despite inheriting a land ravaged by the War of Independence with stalled economic development, Mexicans still had hopes for a peaceful new nation. Nevertheless, at almost all levels Mexicans were inexperienced with self-rule, and despite the high expectations brought with freedom, it cannot be denied that Mexicans were inheriting a land which had been profoundly conditioned by a colonial structure, with a powerful defined elite above the popular classes. Additionally, there was a severe lack of agreement on the political system which the nascent nation should take. Some – in particular the elite sectors of the regions – preferred a federalist organisation which allowed provinces significant administrative and economic power over their realms; but others believed in a centralist system with Mexico City in main control of resources and administration, and which also preserved the two bastions of colonialism: the Church and the Army (in Terry Rugeley's words, "a kind of Spain without the Spaniards: regal, mercantilist, and above all Catholic.")¹ The inexperienced and internally divided society was consequently constituted of several clashing political factions with each believing that it had the solution for creating a stable political system which would bring peace and development to the country.

There were different strategies used to express the political ideals of these groups; lawful methods such as elections and constitutions were a constant in the nascent nation.

¹ Terry Rugeley, "The Compass Points of Unrest: *Pronunciamientos* from Within, Without, Above, and Below in Southeast Mexico, 1821-1876" in Will Fowler (ed.), *Malcontents, rebels and pronunciados: The Politics of Insurrection in Nineteenth-Century Mexico* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, in press).

Then there were other means: revolts, civil wars, insurrections, and above all, *pronunciamientos*. *Pronunciamientos* inundated the country as the military constantly intervened and mixed with political affairs at both local and national levels, consequently provoking endemic political, social, and economic instability. Mexico's political actors and military officers continually used the exercise to express their political beliefs and identities, establish, uphold, or call for the end of existing authorities and institutions, and above all, negotiate for political change. The aim of this thesis is to explore the dynamic, purpose, and fundamental impact of the *pronunciamiento* in one region of nineteenth-century Mexico: the Yucatecan peninsula, concentrating on the period from the first to the second independence of the region (1821-1840).

Why focus on such a specific practice, in such a defined region, and within this time frame? It is undeniable that the early independent years of Mexico still deserve extensive political investigation; the advent of independence and the struggles to build the political system of the nation not only released political, social, and economic pressures which had been building throughout the colonial era, but understanding the period is, in Timothy Anna's words, "fundamental to all that came after".² It is impossible to understand the years of the Reform, or even the build-up to the Mexican Revolution of 1910 without first comprehending what came before. This period constituted the formation of issues such as the establishment of distinct political ideologies; the Church-State relationship; the attitude of the *criollos* towards the Spaniards; the relations between Mexico City and the regions; and the tendency of the military to mix in politics. Yet, until recently (the past twenty years or so), the period had largely been ignored in terms of political analysis. In 1960, Robert Potash wrote, "the historical period [of Mexico] that is least understood and the one to which the greatest

² Timothy E. Anna, "Demystifying Early Nineteenth-Century Mexico", *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*, Vol.9, No.1 (Winter, 1993), p.122.

contributions can be made is that between 1821 and 1867”.³ More than twenty years later Eric Van Young continued to assert that the period in question remains “one of the great unexplored territories of Mexican history,”⁴ with Michael Costeloe agreeing that “The Revolution in particular has been subjected to intense scrutiny [...] The colonial period has been equally, if not even better, served [...] There remains, however, one substantial gap in the historiography [:] the nineteenth century.”⁵ Indeed, it has only been during the past twenty years or so that Mexican historians have started to challenge the generalised view of this period as one of caudillos and revolts, starting to pay attention to its political complexities, with comprehensive examination and synthesis of political ideas and ideals, systems, governments and figures. Nevertheless, Will Fowler stated as late as 1998 that, “the nineteenth century remains, to this day, one of the least-studied and one of the most-misrepresented periods of Mexican history” and still “continues to suffer from gross simplifications.”⁶

The previous over-generalised historical reports on the era which concentrated on instability and insurrection emanated primarily from the “chaos” school of thought, a school which the liberal historians such as Vicente Riva Palacios of the 1880s established, as they interpreted the years of 1821 to about 1854 as a period plagued with conflict, instability and anarchy; this was mainly done in order to stress the importance of the triumph of the liberal Reform under President Benito Juárez of 1855 to 1867.⁷ Contemporary conservative historians such as Lucas Alamán also had biased perspectives, as they gave partisan reports which emphasised the violent reputation of this period, in order to exalt the glory of the

³ Robert A. Potash, “Historiography of Mexico since 1821”, *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol.40, No.3 (Aug. 1960), p.423.

⁴ Eric Van Young, “Recent Anglophone Scholarship on Mexico and Central America in the Age of Revolution (1750-1850)”, *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol.65, No.4 (Nov., 1985), p.731.

⁵ Michael P. Costeloe, *The Central Republic in Mexico, 1835-1846: hombres de bien in the Age of Santa Anna* (Cambridge [England]: New York, NY, USA: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p.1.

⁶ Will Fowler, *Mexico in the Age of Proposals: 1821-1853* (Westport: Greenwood. Press, 1998), p.2.

⁷ These historians include figures such as Ignacio Altamirano, *Historia y política de México, 1821-1882* (México: 1947), and Vicente Riva Palacio, *México a través de los siglos* (5 vols., México: 1887-1889).

colonial era.⁸ Writers during the *porfiriato* (1876-1910) such as Justo Sierra,⁹ also emphasised the chaos perspective of the early independent years, so as to emphasize the success of President Porfirio Díaz.¹⁰ Consequently, as Anna has stated, “we have been too dependent on the classic eyewitness accounts of Mexican authors who were themselves partisan participants in early republican affairs – Mora, Mier, Bustamante, Zavala, Bocanegra, Alamán, Tornel.”¹¹

Donald Stevens has also pointed out that this tendency to concentrate on epic chaos (based on the actions of military heroes and villains) has arisen because “historians have preferred military to civilian subjects”.¹² Simplistic studies of the activities of caudillos (and one in particular, by the name of Antonio López de Santa Anna), revolutions and dictatorships have dominated the so-called “Age of Santa Anna” (a tendency which Josefina Vázquez has also noted).¹³ Indeed, until recently historians have ignored the complex political themes and ideals of the time, tending to stress that “the issues and ideas in conflict [...] are assumed to be personal rather than political in any usual sense.”¹⁴ In Anna’s words, historians have consequently painted a picture “of chaos unparalleled in Mexican history; a dreary landscape taken to be populated by self-serving dictators and military nabobs: a whirlpool of political disintegration, economic decay and general backwardness.”¹⁵

During approximately the last twenty years or so, historians have been striving to challenge this view of “chaos”, with recent analysis on political activities, ideologies,

⁸ Lucas Alamán, *Historia de México desde los primeros movimientos que prepararon su independencia en el año de 1808, hasta la época presente* (México, D.F: Instituto Cultural Helénico, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1985).

⁹ Justo Sierra, *Evolución política del pueblo mexicano* (México: 1900-1902).

¹⁰ Josefina Zoraida Vázquez, “Los años olvidados”, *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*, Vol.5, No.2 (Summer, 1989), p.313.

¹¹ Anna, “Demystifying”, p.120.

¹² Donald F. Stevens, “Autonomists, Nativists, Republicans, and Monarchists: Conspiracy and Political History in Nineteenth-Century Mexico”, *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*, Vol.10, No.2 (Winter, 1994), p.257.

¹³ Josefina Zoraida Vázquez, “Un viejo tema: el federalismo y el centralismo”, *Historia Mexicana* XLII: 3 (1993), p.626.

¹⁴ Stevens, “Autonomists”, p.248.

¹⁵ Anna, “Demystifying”, p.120.

factions, and figures beginning to mushroom. Political historians such as Timothy Anna, Christian Archer, David Brading, Michael Costeloe, Will Fowler, Brian Hamnett, Jaime E. Rodriguez O. and Vázquez are but a few of those¹⁶ who, according to Alan Knight, are contributing to rectifying the “black hole of Mexican historiography,”¹⁷ with it now beginning to fade to a “light grey.”¹⁸ In Stevens’ words, historians have finally begun to take “political differences seriously”,¹⁹ with Anna agreeing that we are beginning to grant “nineteenth-century political leaders the simple respect of recognizing that they may have held genuine political principles.”²⁰ Historians have now begun to cease interpreting the events involving, for example, *pronunciamientos*, revolts, civil wars, the federalist-centralist divide, the conservative-liberal struggle, caudillos like Santa Anna, and foreign invasions as “some giant exercise in futility that left all the great questions to be settled all over again in the twentieth century”.²¹ Instead, they have started justifying and exposing these events for what they really were, as “the process, imperfect as always, of defining, creating, building nationhood.”²² This is not to say that historians are claiming that the period is one of stability; between 1821-1852, 23 different presidents ruled, with more than a thousand *pronunciamientos* and several civil wars occurring, along with caudillos who came to power with the War of Independence, relishing and refusing to relinquish their rule. With the exception of the presidencies of Guadalupe Victoria (1824-1828) and José Joaquín de Herrera (1848-1851), no government or president during this period fulfilled their full terms of

¹⁶ For a full list of historians who deal with the political analysis of nineteenth-century Mexico, see the bibliography.

¹⁷ Anna, “Demystifying”, p.119.

¹⁸ Alan Knight, “Subalterns, Signifiers and Statistics: Perspectives on Mexican Historiography”, *Latin American Research Review*, Vol.37, No.2 (Feb 2005), p.144.

¹⁹ Donald Fithian Stevens, *Origins of Instability in Early Republican Mexico* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1991), p.27.

²⁰ Anna, “Demystifying”, p.137.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p.122.

²² *Ibid.*

office.²³ Instead, historians are attempting to unravel the political and social complexities behind these events, concentrating on the compositions of social sectors, developments in political economy, the fluid and evolving dynamic of political factions and coalitions, and the analysis of political ideologies.

One of the most recent subcategories of this political analysis has been that of the *pronunciamiento*.²⁴ Perhaps it is because of the large-scale changes which *pronunciamientos* have brought about in Mexican politics (such as independence, federalism, centralism, the establishment and overthrow of presidents) that historians have lost perspective on its more intimate dynamics (i.e. specific and detailed origins, actors, practice, and comprehensive consequences). Generally, historical texts have only mentioned the practice (until very recently) in the context of stressing the tumultuous change of presidents, governors and/or constitutions; as a simple means to an end, with concentration mainly on its national (and destabilizing) impact. In other words, historical literature has depicted the *pronunciamiento* as a brief measure to achieving national objectives, leading to the neglect of its more complex workings. As Vázquez has rightly noted, "The study of the political reality behind the foreign interventions and the *pronunciamientos* has been avoided."²⁵

What exactly was a *pronunciamiento*? The *pronunciamiento* was essentially a type of revolt and an act of insubordination; most dictionaries and encyclopaedias define it as a military uprising or coup. The *Diccionario Usual de la Real Academia Española* states it to be an "Alzamiento militar contra el Gobierno, promovido por un jefe del Ejército u otro caudillo,"²⁶ with the *Enciclopedia Microsoft Encarta Online* defining it as a:

²³ Will Fowler, "Dreams of Stability: Mexican Political Thought during the 'Forgotten Years'. An Analysis of the Beliefs of the Creole Intelligentsia (1821-1853)", *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, Vol.14, No.3 (Sep., 1995), p.305.

²⁴ Professor Will Fowler at the University of St. Andrews has initiated a project (2007-2010) concerned with the extensive analysis of the origins and actors, process, and memory of the *pronunciamiento* in nineteenth-century Mexico. Although this thesis is not officially part of this project, it has been completed under the supervision of Professor Fowler.

²⁵ Vázquez, "Un viejo tema", p.626.

²⁶ This can be found online at: <http://buscon.rae.es/drael/SrvltGUIBusUsual>

sublevación militar cuyo objeto es la consecución del poder o, cuando menos, la presión que obligue a la sustitución de la política gubernamental. Lo que busca de inmediato es el apoyo castrense y por supuesto político, mediante una acción militar puntual normalmente de carácter incruento.²⁷

Bearing in mind that the majority of significant and successful *pronunciamientos* were carried out by army officers, it is understandable that official references associate and even equate the practice with other forms of (mainly armed) insurrection, such as local and national coup attempts, barrack uprisings, mutinies, insurrections, conspiracies, rebellions, and civil wars.

As part of the recent trend of studies attempting to rectify the chaos theory of the period, this work will prove that the *pronunciamiento* was not a simple act of armed insurrection which was used to take over local and national power, and thus provoking instability in the process (as it has traditionally been defined). Instead, this thesis will demonstrate that the *pronunciamiento* was in fact a complex exercise in expressing political identity and attempting to achieve political change. Admittedly, several significant *pronunciamientos* did end up in replacing governments (such as *La Acordada* of 1828 in Mexico City which overthrew President Manuel Gómez Pedraza, and in the Yucatecan context, the *pronunciamiento* of 1829 which replaced the entire governing administration headed by José Tiburcio López), but this was not the sole aim of the practice, and on most occasions the *pronunciados* did not even state it to be an objective of their *pronunciamiento*. Indeed, *pronunciamientos* were also used to disobey or contest political and economic decrees, demand that a government change its policies (fiscal, economic, moral), manifest the removal of support for a particular governing body or political system, demand a new political model to run the country, and even demonstrate support for an existing government and political system (such as the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* of 1833 headed by Francisco de Paula Toro, which supported his brother-in-law President Antonio López de Santa Anna and

²⁷ This can be found online at: http://es.encarta.msn.com/text_76515854580/Pronunciamiento.html

the federal system which was then in place). The *pronunciamiento*'s main purpose was thus not to overthrow, but was a method of political representation and moreover was an exercise of *negotiation* for political change. Indeed, as shall be discovered, while the majority of significant *pronunciamientos* in Yucatán did result in local coups, or had intentions to replace the ruling authorities (such as those in 1821, 1829, 1831, 1833 and 1834), nationally they were a completely different exercise altogether: attempts at negotiation with the national government (this was the case in 1821, 1823, 1829, 1831, 1832, 1834 and 1835).

This study will also challenge the traditional view that a *pronunciamiento* (like a revolt or a coup) only succeeded because of armed insurrection. The intention of the *pronunciamiento* was not military action, but to *threaten* the use of armed force in order to intimidate those targeted by the *pronunciamiento* to attend to the demands of the *pronunciados*. The *pronunciados* included this threat in written form in the *pronunciamiento* plan, a standard accompanying text which outlined the complaints and demands of the *pronunciados*. The *pronunciamiento* was thus not an outright rebellion, but to use Miguel Alonso Báquer's phrase, it was a "gesto de rebeldía."²⁸ Indeed, the only *pronunciamientos* in Yucatán to actually result in violence during the period discussed were those of 1834 and 1836-1840. Additionally, *pronunciamientos* not only succeeded because of the threat of military force, but through support manifested in *pronunciamientos de adhesión* (*pronunciamientos* of support) by other communities. These adherences were essential not only for the intimidation of governing authorities, but to manifest the liberal belief that the will of the people (manifested through the practice of the *pronunciamiento*) had the legitimate right to political representation and contestation.

This brings yet another debatable point into light. While one should not underestimate the role of the military in leading and realising *pronunciamientos* (indeed, they were the ones

²⁸ Miguel Alonso Báquer, *El modelo español de pronunciamiento* (Madrid: Rialp, 1983), p.40.

with the men and the resources available to intimidate opposition into listening to their demands, and to also pressure lesser powers into producing *pronunciamientos de adhesión*), the *pronunciamiento* on most occasions was not a strictly military practice. Firstly, evident collaboration between civilians and officers existed in most *pronunciamientos*, with either the military being coopted by civilians to realise a *pronunciamiento*, or because soldiers needed the participation of civilians to legitimize their movement and supply resources. As shall be discovered, every significant *pronunciamiento* in Yucatán in the period discussed involved not only military officers, but political elite, merchants, clergy, *vecinos*, landowners, *campesinos*, and even the Maya. Thus, to a major extent, the *pronunciamiento* was undeniably an expression of political ideology and civilian worries. In Fowler's words, "To argue that Mexican politicians had no serious political ideas or ideals would be superficial as well as absurd", and it will be argued here that the *pronunciamiento* was one of the most graphic ways of demonstrating political ideology.²⁹ Moreover, many *pronunciamientos de adhesión* were issued not only by garrisons, but by civilian groups: *ayuntamiento* officials, the business and political elite, and *vecinos*, who not only seconded the main *pronunciamiento*, but in their *pronunciamiento de adhesión* text would address their own concrete civilian concerns.

Consequently, although the *pronunciamiento* was clearly an extra-constitutional practice, this did not mean that it was automatically a vehicle of military and political instability as historians have traditionally and generally defined it to be. It was a phenomenon which clearly emerged in a context where the constituted political institutions and nascent state bureaucracy were, if not non-existent, weak and lacking in authority. In a country which had no experience and no faith in constitutional elections, the *pronunciamiento* seemed like the appropriate instrument at the right time to ensure that the voice of the people was

²⁹ Fowler, *Mexico in the Age*, p.4.

represented. Additionally, since the creation of an independent nation, the *pronunciamiento* was not seen as an out of the ordinary political practice, but simply the common way to express political belief. Indeed, it was through a *pronunciamiento* (the Plan of Iguala) that the nation was created; subsequently, the accomplishment of a federal republic in 1823-1824 through *pronunciamientos* only sealed the belief in the power of the people and the *pronunciamiento* to form and change the political system of the country.

Moreover, Mexicans had never experienced self-government before; with a *pronunciamiento* jump-starting the very independent political life of the nation, it is not surprising that its pulse would continue to beat throughout the greater part of the nineteenth century. *Pronunciamientos* were responsible for declaring Mexican independence from Spain (1821), demanding the empowerment of the provinces and subsequently federalism (1823), successfully calling for independence of states from Mexico (such as Texas in 1836 and Yucatán in 1840), establishing centralism (1835) and deposing several presidents (such as Vicente Guerrero in 1829, Anastasio Bustamante in 1832 and then again in 1841, and Antonio López de Santa Anna in 1844). It was consequently not an abnormal practice of instability, but a norm of political representation. Indeed, from the 1821 Plan of Iguala to the 1876 Plan of Tuxtepec which brought about the Porfirio Díaz administration, more than 1,500 *pronunciamientos* erupted throughout Mexico. There were constant attempts to establish the political system of the nation through legal avenues such as elections and constitutions, but it was the *pronunciamiento* which continued to surface and alter the administrative order of the nation. In basic terms, it was simply seen as the way to do politics in the early years of independence, as constitutions, elections, decrees, governors, presidents, and vice-presidents were frequently both established and overthrown by *pronunciamientos*. In this aspect, Fowler has rightly stated that *pronunciamientos* were so endemic in the nineteenth century that they became “an integral part of Mexican political culture during its

early national period,”³⁰ with François-Xavier Guerra asserting that that the *pronunciamiento* deserves to be viewed as one of the most fundamental political phenomena of nineteenth-century Mexico because of the fact that “todos los cambios políticos importantes de este período, incluidos los constitucionales, tienen su origen en *pronunciamientos*, empezando por la propia independencia.”³¹

In particular, the *regional* aspects of the *pronunciamiento* deserve special attention. As Vázquez has pointed out, the majority of *pronunciamientos* in nineteenth-century Mexico began not in Mexico City, but in the country’s regions. In her words, “los movimientos políticos se generaron siempre en la periferia pero se decidieron en el centro, donde se consolidaban los acuerdos.”³² The reasons for this will be discussed in the following chapter, but it is important to note here that in spite of the regional element of *pronunciamientos*, historians have continued to concentrate on the way in which they impacted politics in Mexico City, disregarding their regional and local dynamic.

In more general terms, nineteenth-century political analysis of the regions until recently has been ignored. In 1944 Harry Bernstein criticized the tendency for Mexican historians to follow the trend of “centralist historiography”, which constituted the habit of focusing exclusively on political events in Mexico City and “the Core”, or interpreting events of the regions solely in the context of and from the perspective of the centre.³³ In 1982 Luis González called for more regional-based analyses of Mexican history in his works *Invitación a la microhistoria* and *Nueva invitación a la microhistoria*, with Van Young recently advancing this necessity of the re-examination of history through the micro- and local lens

³⁰ Will Fowler, “Civil Conflict in Independent Mexico: An Overview” in Rebecca Earle (ed.), *Rumours of Wars: Civil Conflict in Nineteenth-Century Latin America* (London: Institute of Latin American Studies, 2000), p.65.

³¹ François-Xavier Guerra, “El pronunciamiento en México: prácticas e imaginarios: Discursos, prácticas y configuraciones del poder”, *Travaux et Recherches dans les Amériques de centre* (37, June 2000), p.15.

³² Vázquez, “Un viejo tema”, p.623.

³³ See Harry Bernstein, “Regionalism in the National History of Mexico”, *Acta Americana* 2 (Oct-Dec. 1944), pp.305-314.

rather than interpreting it in terms of macro- and nationally-based perspectives.³⁴ As late as 1998, Allan Wells was also calling for the end of historical analysis *desde afuera*, asserting that what was needed was a view *desde adentro*.³⁵ This propensity towards emphasis on the centre was once more due to over-reliance on the nineteenth-century authors mentioned above, who were all based in Mexico City and thus related events from the perspective of the centre towards the periphery. There was also consequently the natural assumption that significant political ideologies and factions were based solely in the centre and not in the regions. Historians have consequently depicted political identity during the early independent years as, according to Anna, an “artificial construct that suppressed other identities”, with works “highly centralist in orientation, patriotic or nationalistic in inspiration”³⁶ taking precedence in our interpretation of Mexican history.

The current generation of historians has reacted against this traditional centralist approach and the “institutional superstructure”³⁷ image, and they are beginning to derail what Anna refers to as the “regionalism makes things too murky for words school”.³⁸ According to Knight, this new discipline (referred to by Wells as the *historia patria*)³⁹ has made “perhaps the biggest contribution in sheer volume of knowledge”⁴⁰ during the past twenty years or so. The focus on regionalism is extremely significant; firstly, as Anna has pointed out, “The history of Mexico is a history of its states; its identity is an identity based on states and regions.”⁴¹ Many tend to forget that “Mexico” was not Mexico City plus many dissident states who were only serving to make extra trouble while those in the centre struggled to form the political system of the nation. Mexico was – and continues to be – its regions: we cannot

³⁴ Allan Wells, “Forgotten Chapters of Yucatán's Past: Nineteenth-Century Politics in Historiographical Perspective”, *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*, Vol.12, No.2 (Summer, 1996), p.199.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Anna, “Demystifying”, p.120.

³⁷ Gilbert M. Joseph, *Rediscovering the Past at Mexico's Periphery: Essays on the History of Modern Yucatán* (University, Ala: University of Alabama Press, 1986), p.9.

³⁸ Anna, “Demystifying”, p.122.

³⁹ Wells, “Forgotten Chapters”, p.199.

⁴⁰ Knight, “Subalterns”, p.144.

⁴¹ Anna, “Demystifying”, p.130.

understand its early nineteenth-century period without being aware of the political and economic objectives and concerns of regions such as Yucatán, Zacatecas, or Veracruz, for example. Every region had (and still has) its own particular socio-political, historical, and economic context and history; and to use Raymond Buve's phrase Mexico was (and is) "an archipelago of local societies."⁴² Consequently, in order to effectively appreciate nineteenth-century Mexico, one has to understand the complex realities, differences and similarities of its regions during this period.⁴³ As Anna highlights, the *mexicanidad* (Mexican identity) that then existed theoretically, was not present in reality in immense parts of the country: Yucatán itself had been a province entirely separate from New Spain during the colonial era. A real and genuine study of Mexico must there include the examination of its "constituent parts and arriving at the whole, rather than looking back from the whole to define the parts."⁴⁴

In terms of regional study, the *pronunciamiento* until very recently (the past two years to be precise) has not been examined. *Pronunciamientos* which were started in the regions are still generally being viewed through the lens of the national administration and how they affected national politics, rather than historians concentrating on their local origins, dynamic, and consequences. This is indeed surprising as, Peter Guardino has pointed out, "most of the *pronunciamientos* that resulted in changes of government in Mexico from around 1820-1855 originated in areas other than Mexico City."⁴⁵ The powerful capital of the early nineteenth century housed an administration which sought to control and impose its will on far-off regions (such as Texas, Yucatán and Zacatecas), many of which had previously enjoyed relative levels of administrative and economic autonomy during the colonial era. Increased

⁴² Raymond Buve, "Ayuntamientos and Pronunciamientos During the 19th Century: Examples from Tlaxcala between Independence and the Reform War", in Fowler (ed.), *Malcontents, rebels and pronunciados: the Politics of Insurrection in Nineteenth-Century Mexico* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, in press).

⁴³ The first to introduce this concept was L.B Simpson. See L.B. Simpson, *Muchos Méxicos* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1977).

⁴⁴ Anna, "Demystifying", p.122.

⁴⁵ Peter F. Guardino, *Peasants, Politics, and the Formation of Mexico's National State: Guerrero, 1800-1857* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1996), p.126.

economic demands from the centre and debilitating trade and tariff decrees, along with centrally-imposed authorities were among the principal factors which infringed on the economic and political power of the elite of these regions, causing significant resentment. The desire for a certain level of independence from the Mexican administration combined with the constant discontent and disappointment with national administrations led to regional power holders forming ideals as to what system optimally benefitted the situation in their homeland. These ideals almost always involved a federal system of government, and on some occasions, even secession (at which Texas was permanently successful, and Yucatán temporarily so). In Anna's words, federalism (i.e. increased autonomy from Mexico City) was thus "a response by regional oligarchies to assure that their economic power would be complemented by political power."⁴⁶ The *pronunciamientos* issued by the regions contesting national policies or administrations were consequently traditionally viewed by those of the centre as disobedient practices, provoking unnecessary instability and unrest. As a result, historians have either ignored or disregarded the *local* historical and sociopolitical circumstances which inspired these *pronunciamientos* with regard to their regional actors, origins, and motivations, along with the consequences which they had on their respective territories. For example, while existing historiography has highlighted that the 1829 Campechean *pronunciamiento* in its surprising call for centralism had no impact at a national level (except to cause condemnation from the centre followed by numerous efforts to reincorporate Yucatán into the Mexican fold), we are not informed of what local motivations were behind this mystifying demand.

Yucatán's *pronunciamientos* especially have been slotted into this category of dismissal and negativity, due to the region's reputation as one of the more peripheral and pro-autonomous areas of Mexico. Situated more than a 1,000 km from Mexico City and on the

⁴⁶ Timothy E. Anna, *Forging Mexico* (Lincoln, Neb; London : University of Nebraska Press, 1998), p.64.

south-eastern tip of the country (see Map 1), Yucatán has traditionally been “regarded as more marked in its regional identity than any other entity within the republic.”⁴⁷ It was an entirely different province from that of New Spain during the colonial era, possessing its own political and economic agendas and administrations.⁴⁸ Indeed, it was not until the end of World War II that the region was even connected by land with the rest of Mexico. Yucatecans had also petitioned on more than one occasion (1847 and 1914) to become a protectorate of the United States, arguing that they had more in common geographically and economically with the North Americans than they did with the Mexican republic.⁴⁹ It is of no surprise then that Yucatán’s traditional isolation has been extended to and has biased the academic realm as well.⁵⁰ Political history on the region concentrating on post-independent years has stressed the constant clashes of authority between the Yucatecan elites and the Mexican administration over the dictation of the peninsula’s policies with regard to administration and trade. The desire of the region’s elites to possess a relative level of local power (meaning freedom from interference and potentially harmful decrees from Mexico City) versus severe dependence on financial aid from and trade relations with Mexico dominates the political history of the region. The region’s remote location and its numerous secessions from Mexico (1823, 1829 and 1840) have thus led to a one-dimensional perspective of the region in the historian’s mind: as a territory forever seeking to be autonomous, and making no effort at negotiation to unite with Mexico.

⁴⁷ Joseph, *Rediscovering*, p.10.

⁴⁸ Indeed, the only political connection that Yucatán had with New Spain was its dependence on the latter’s judicial court. Yucatán had also fostered a healthy trade with Cuba, Jamaica, and the United States (a point further expanded upon in Chapter Two).

⁴⁹ Joseph, *Rediscovering*, p.38.

⁵⁰ See Renán Irigoyen Rosado, “Interpretación económica del separatismo yucateco (1840-1848)” *Revista de la Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán*, 10, 60 (1968); Mary W. Williams, “Secessionist Diplomacy of Yucatán”, *Hispanic American Historical Review* 9 (1929), pp.132-43; Roberto Villaseñor, *El separatismo en Yucatán: novella histórica-política* (México: A. Botas, 1916); Douglas W. Richmond, “Yucatán’s struggle for Sovereignty during the Mexican-U.S. Conflict, 1836-1848” in *La ciudad y el campo en la historia de México: Memoria de la VII Reunión de Historiadores Mexicanos y Norteamericanos*, Oaxaca, 1985 (México: UNAM, 1992).



Map 1 – Mexico

Source: Mark Wasserman, *Everyday Life and Politics in Nineteenth Century Mexico. Men, Women, and War* (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 2000).

The marginal location of Yucatán did not make it any exception to *pronunciamientos*; from 1821-1840, there were more than 50 *pronunciamientos* realised in the region, with the most significant *pronunciamientos* occurring in either Yucatán's capital of Mérida, or its sister city Campeche (with the exception of the Santiago Imán *pronunciamiento* of 1836-1840 which was issued in the eastern city of Valladolid).⁵¹ Viewed from the traditional perspective of nineteenth-century inhabitants of Mexico City, Yucatán's *pronunciamientos* have generally been categorized as national forces of dissent and instability, demonstrating a general Yucatecan lack of desire to unite with Mexico. While the *pronunciamiento* of 1821

⁵¹ These include the most significant *pronunciamientos* which were issued by the main cities of Mérida (the capital) and Campeche, as well as the *pronunciamientos de adhesión* of the smaller towns which supported these larger acts. As it is not possible to discuss in detail the complexities of these *pronunciamientos* of support, concentration will be given in this work to the larger *pronunciamientos*, in an attempt to define the salient features of the practice in the context of Yucatán.

(carried out in both Mérida and Campeche) seconded Agustín Iturbide's Plan of Iguala for independence, Yucatecans initially hesitated on joining Mexico, giving those of the centre the impression of their instinct for a separate Yucatecan independence. The 1823 *pronunciamientos* (also carried out in the two principal cities of Yucatán) seconding the Plan of Casa Mata (which called for the empowerment of the Provincial Deputations) and subsequently demanding federalism were also seen by the politicians of Mexico City as forces of Yucatecan autonomy. The isolated and unsuccessful 1829 *pronunciamiento* of Campeche calling for centralism mystified those in the centre, who saw it as a nuisance and inconvenience, with the consequences being Yucatán's partial secession from Mexico for almost three years. The 1836-1840 Santiago Imán revolt which resulted in Yucatán's independence from Mexico was seen by Mexicans as the epitome of the unstable relations which had existed between Mexico and Yucatán since their unification in 1821, with the Santa Anna administration subsequently directing the Mexican invasion of Yucatán of 1842-1843 to reclaim the land. If Yucatán did follow the general trend of seconding national *pronunciamientos*, its *pronunciados* were simply seen as adhering to a greater movement; indeed the 1832 *pronunciamiento* of Mérida calling for federalism, and the 1834-1835 *pronunciamientos* of Campeche supporting centralism were interpreted by the Mexicans of the centre as practices simply seconding larger national *pronunciamientos*, without any local motivations of their own.

This study will, however, analyse the *pronunciamiento* from the perspective of the Yucatecan *pronunciados* (the region's elites),⁵² altering its traditional depiction from the

⁵² It is necessary to define what the term "elite" means in the context of the *pronunciados*. Race was the primary characteristic of the principal *pronunciados* of Yucatán: they were always white – Hispanics or creoles (eventually evolving into complete creole supremacy) – with the Spanish surname being a significant indicator of elite status (even to this day in Yucatán, anyone with a Mayan surname, despite their colour, is still considered as lower in the social hierarchy). Their professions were usually ex-*encomenderos*, *hacendados*, clergy, businessmen, military, intelligentsia, lawyers, civil and administrative employees, *escritores*, doctors, surgeons, students, editors, artists, self-supporting writers and others who helped ferment and sustain the intellectual renaissance, teachers and students. Given this range, it becomes apparent that economic ranking did

national angle and from the viewpoint of the centre. This work will discover that in their majority, Yucatecan *pronunciamientos* were not secessionist attempts by regional caudillos, but were instead politically-based efforts by its elites to *negotiate* with Mexico in order to achieve political change. Indeed, the 1821, 1823, 1829 and 1840 *pronunciamientos* all used secession as a direct or indirect *threat* if the national administrations did not attend to their demands of beneficial trade terms (as in 1821), or federalism (1823 and 1840), or centralism (1829). This work will consequently argue that secession was in reality a tool of negotiation in the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* practice, not a tangible desire when it came to the political ideology of the majority of the Yucatecan elite.⁵³ In this vein, the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* will be viewed not as an instrument of dissent, but as a tool used in national political negotiation, motivated by local political ideologies and social concerns, as part of the process of – to use Anna’s phraseology – the attempts to “forge” the new nation. The subsequent chapters will thus justify regional elites’ actions towards the centre as legitimate aims and demands, not as negative forces of dissent. Prime examples of this validation are the motivations of the Yucatecan merchants; inhabiting a land which was poor in resources, a healthy trade was vital for the economic and material survival of those in the region. The *pronunciamientos* of 1821, 1823, 1824, 1829 and 1840 were as a result all motivated in some way by the wishes of Yucatecan merchants for improved trade tariffs and the maintenance of trade between Yucatán and its principal commercial partner Cuba.

not influence elite status as much as race and the Spanish name. This creole oligarchy usually resided in the main cities of Mérida and Campeche and their immediate environs. If you were not from either of these cities, it is highly likely that you would be shunned by the most prominent *pronunciados* who were from Mérida and Campeche. As shall be seen, *pronunciado* of 1836-1840 Santiago Imán – who came from the eastern town of Tizimin – was ridiculed by the elite of Mérida and Campeche, despite his high social class as a *criollo hacendado*. Residing in Mérida and Campeche meant that the ability to speak Spanish was another requisite of an elite *pronunciado*. Indeed, in the Maya-dominated east, even *criollos* spoke the indigenous language.

⁵³ Many of Yucatán’s own historians profess that Yucatán was never separatist, but federalist. See Albino Acereto, *Evolución histórica de las relaciones políticas entre México y Yucatán* (México: 1907), and Jorge Ignacio Rubio Mañé, *El Separatismo de Yucatán* (Mérida, Yucatán: Imprenta Oriente, 1935).

This analysis will in turn contribute towards dismantling the “disintegration” theory of early nineteenth-century Mexican history, which has traditionally blamed disobedient and self-seeking regional elites for threatening the centre and provoking unnecessary instability during this period. Original information will be provided on how events in Mexico City were perceived by and affected the periphery, in a territory with its own political and economic objectives (what Anna refers to as the “provincial patria, [(] which often took precedence over those of the national patria[)].)”⁵⁴ It will follow the line of Nettie Lee Benson’s proposal that the tendency of Mexico City to constantly impose its desires on the regions was the real cause of instability, not vice versa, as has traditionally been seen. In her words:

When historians awake to the fact that much is yet to be learned about what actually occurred during the period of 1810-1857, perhaps someone will investigate the overwhelming desire of Mexico City and its immediate area to control all of Mexico and will see this desire as a significant factor in the chaos of the period.⁵⁵

In fact, Vázquez points out that what should be focused on is the fact that Mexico remained united in the most part after independence:

a pesar de varias crisis profundas, sin seguir el patrón que afectó a otras colonias, fragmentadas a lo largo de las líneas de las audiencias o de las intendencias. El caso es sorprendente dado que el enorme territorio novohispano había propiciado un regionalismo que fortaleció el establecimiento de las intendencias y de las diputaciones provinciales más como la lucha independentista, pero que pudo sortear la fórmula federalista de 1824.⁵⁶

This unified state was in part due to Yucatán’s constant attempts to remain united with Mexico with terms beneficial to its elites, not to secede from it and become independent (indeed, Yucatán united with Mexico in 1821, and reunited with it in 1824, 1832 and 1843).

Not only have the region’s *pronunciamientos* simply been viewed as exercises in autonomy, but their *local* character, impulses, practice and consequences have been heavily ignored. This has led to little knowledge available of the *pronunciamiento* as a local political

⁵⁴ Anna, “Demystifying”, p.131.

⁵⁵ Nettie Lee Benson, *Mexico and the Spanish Cortes 1810-1822: Eight Essays* (Austin; London: for the Institute of Latin American Studies by the University of Texas Press, 1966), p.209, quoted in Anna, “Demystifying”, p.121.

⁵⁶ Vázquez, “Un viejo tema”, p.623.

tool rather than one of simple national political change. The fact that the majority of Yucatecan *pronunciamientos* were “home-grown” (that is to say their impulses stemmed almost always from within rather than without) implies that local factors had an extremely significant part to play in the inspiration and realization of these practices, which naturally also had significant local consequences. Despite being influenced by Mexican politics and economic decrees, Yucatán’s peripheral location still allowed for the development of a strong local political society. This community had its own internal political divisions, and a majority of Yucatecan elites also possessed economic agendas distinct from those in Mexico. Indeed, independence in 1821 brought with it the opportunities for *criollos* (in Yucatán and Mexico) to occupy positions of substantial political power, and it soon became evident that the way to obtain this power was not through elections, but through *pronunciamientos*. Consequently, endless factional bickering in peninsular politics (or the state’s “political carousel” as Wells prefers to call it)⁵⁷ led to factions continually using the *pronunciamiento* to gain governing and military positions in the region, in order to implement their own political agendas. By the mid 1820s the two main opposing factions in Yucatán were the radical and federal Liga, and the moderate liberal Camarilla; by the 1830s, the *ligados* and some *camarilleros* then formed the federalist party, with their opposition being the centralists (constituted of the rest of the *camarilleros* and many Campecheans who had remained staunchly centralist throughout the early independent years). Almost all significant *pronunciamientos* which occurred between 1821-1840 (with the exception of the *pronunciamientos* of 1823) in some way targeted the opposing political faction of the *pronunciados*, be it to overthrow them (1821, 1829, 1831, 1832, 1833, 1834, 1840), or to protest against their governance of the region (1824); indeed local congresses, *ayuntamientos*, governors and *comandantes generales* were constantly replaced through the *pronunciamiento*. To ignore the local factors behind these

⁵⁷ Wells, “Forgotten Chapters”, p.216.

pronunciamientos would evidently risk neglecting the comprehension of the more complex uses, actors, consequences, and dynamic of this practice in a specifically Yucatecan context.

The primary aim of this thesis is to therefore expose the true dynamic of the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento*, viewing it simultaneously as a force of national negotiation, and as a practice in which deep-rooted local issues were resolved. It is essential to study these elements together, as in many cases local issues (such as trade, economy, and political ideologies) intricately interweaved with the national political momentum and circumstances of the time, consequently producing a *pronunciamiento*. In this manner, this study will enhance one's understanding of the exercise of the *pronunciamiento* with regard to its dynamic (origins, actors, process, consequences, and memory) in a specific Yucatecan context. This work will consequently expose the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* not just as a national exercise, but as a local practice, having, in Anna's words, a "dual identity."⁵⁸ The results gathered from this examination can in turn be applied to more universal questions about the regional *pronunciamiento*, contributing to the revision of current theories which perceive regional *pronunciamientos* as simply practices of dissent from states to centre. It will prompt the reinterpretation of regional *pronunciamientos* as subjects which deserve to be examined as processes and products of intimate local ambitions, with their own idiosyncratic dynamic and particular regional flavour and repertoire. While stressing the Yucatecan singularity and exceptionality in this case, and keeping in mind that the context in every region would have been different, this study will nevertheless inspire an attempt of establishment of the typology of the *pronunciamiento* in other regions of Mexico.

Additionally, a detailed examination of the *pronunciamiento* in this context will contribute to an only recently opened window of understanding into Yucatecan political mentalities and events during this period (such as *pronunciamientos*, the sentiment towards

⁵⁸ Anna, "Demystifying", p.130.

the centre, inter-regional conflict, and indigenous participation in insurrection). The *pronunciamiento* occurred at every time of significant political change of the region during this period (including independence in 1821, federalism in 1823-1824, secession in 1829, federalism in 1832, centralism in 1834-1835, and independence in 1840), and thus it can be used to attempt to comprehend the burning issues in Yucatán at the time. As Wells has highlighted, “the study of regional society in times of crisis provides a valuable opportunity to probe power relationships within the dominant class.”⁵⁹ This work will thus expose that real ideologies of federalism, secession, and even centralism existed in the region, with factions having serious ideals, objectives and aims, with all of them desiring Yucatecan development, and the majority wanting beneficial relations with Mexico.

Finally, it is useful to note what has already been written about Yucatecan politics during this period. As Gilbert Joseph has stated, it is an area which has in major part been ignored; the rejection of “elitist” Yucatecan political history has been generally due to extensive socio-ethnic study of the Yucatecan Maya which began in the 1940s. Howard Cline began this trend with his groundbreaking 700-page thesis on the origins of the Caste War,⁶⁰ prompting a goldrush of sorts to examine the history of the indigenous “people without history,” with authors such as Robert Redfield, Alfonso Villa Rojas, Victoria Bricker, Nelson Reed, and Grant D. Jones being a few of the many who have concentrated on the history and culture of the Maya during the nineteenth century.⁶¹ In this socio-cultural obsession with the

⁵⁹ Wells, “Forgotten Chapters”, pp.200-201.

⁶⁰ Howard Cline, “Regionalism and Society in Yucatán, 1825-1847: A Study of 'Progressivism' and the Origins of the Caste War” (Unpubl. Ph.D. Diss. Harvard University, 1947).

⁶¹ For works which concentrate on this period with reference to the Maya and the Caste War of 1847, see: Robert Redfield and Alfonso Villa Rojas, *Chan Kom: A Maya Village* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934); Redfield, *The Folk Culture of Yucatán* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1941); Villa Rojas, *The Maya of East Central Quintana Roo* (Washington: Carnegie Institute, 1943); Ramon Berzuna Pinto, *Guerra Social en Yucatán* (México: Costa-Amic, 1965); Moisés González Navarro, *Raza y tierra: La guerra de castas y el henequén* (México: El Colegio de México, 1970); Grant D. Jones (ed.), *Anthropology and History in Yucatán* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1977); Leticia Reina, *Las rebeliones campesinas en México, 1819-1906* (México: Siglio Veintiuno, 1980); Victoria Bricker, *The Indian Christ, the Indian King: The Historic Substrate of Maya Myth and Ritual* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981); Robert W. Patch, “Decolonization, the Agrarian problem, and the Origins of the Caste War, 1812-1847” in Jeffery T. Brannon and Gilbert M. Joseph

Maya, according to Wells, “Cline and his progeny” have almost thrown “the baby out with the bathwater”.⁶² Gilbert Joseph has thus significantly called for:

alternative theoretical and conceptual strategies for reinterpreting the study of political history in Yucatán from 1800 to 1876; to meld political history with what we have learned over the last fifty years about the region’s social and economic history, and to compare what happened in the peninsula to what we now know transpired in the national political arena and in other regions.⁶³

Indeed, it should be remembered that the Maya still inhabited a region which was deeply politically fragmented and unstable, and economically weak, and it would be the ultimate failure of regional elites to agree on a common vision for the future which would in large part contribute to engendering the Caste War of 1847. Additionally, one should recall that Yucatán was not an entity onto itself, but part of and inescapably linked to Mexico; the connection between the state and the nation was through its political and military elites, as these were the men who were sent to national congress, and who were responsible for implementing national decrees (and were also those who developed opposition to those decrees). Indeed, as Guardino has pointed out, “the state, although national in conception, was (and is) experienced historically through the actions of individual local officials.”⁶⁴

There have been a handful of political studies of nineteenth-century Yucatán over the past two decades which demonstrate that elite politics now needs to emerge from its long hibernation;⁶⁵ and in the words of Wells, it is rightly time “to gently swing the pendulum back” to political study.⁶⁶

(eds.), *Land, Labor, and Capital in Modern Yucatán: Essays in Regional History and Political Economy* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1991), pp.51-82; Pedro Bracamonte y Sosa, *Historia de los pueblos indígenas de México: La memoria enclaustrada, Historia indígena de Yucatán, 1750-1915* (Mérida, Yucatán: CIESAS, 1994); Don. E. Dumond, *The Machete and the Cross: Campesino Rebellion in Yucatán* (University of Nebraska Press, 1994); Nelson Reed, *The Caste War of Yucatán* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2001).

⁶² Wells, “Forgotten Chapters”, p.200.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p.226.

⁶⁴ Guardino, *Peasants, Politics*, p.11.

⁶⁵ When I say “hibernation”, it is in order to highlight the essential works by the Yucatecan *criollo* historians of late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries which were extensive narratives covering the elite politics of the nineteenth century. They have been extremely helpful in this work. See Serapio Baqueiro, *Ensayo histórico sobre las revoluciones de Yucatán desde el año de 1840 hasta 1864* (Mérida: Ed. Salvador Rodríguez Losa:

Chapter One will attempt to comprehensively review the general theories which already exist on the *pronunciamiento* in terms of its nature and dynamics. It will also explain how this thesis' definition of the *pronunciamiento* differs from the generally established view, with emphasis on its origins, its main actors and motivations, its process and development, and its consequences. Additionally, the typology of the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* will be introduced and compared to that of the general *pronunciamiento* theory which exists. The salient characteristics of the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* (which will be expanded throughout this thesis) will also be exposed. This chapter will also outline how the *pronunciamiento* became established in Mexico, and also how, and more importantly why

Ediciones de la Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán, 1990, first publ.1865-1866); Justo Sierra O' Reilly, *Los indios de Yucatán: Consideraciones sobre el origen, causas y tendencias de la sublevación indígena, sus probables resultados y su posible remedio* (México: Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán, 1994, first publ. 1857); Eligio Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán, desde la época más remota hasta nuestros días* 4 vols. (Mérida, Yucatán: Imprenta de M. Heredia Argüelles, 1879); Joaquín Baranda, *Recordaciones históricas* (Place unpubl., 1907); Juan Francisco Molina Solís, *Historia de Yucatán desde la independencia hasta la época actual* (Mérida: Talleres Gráficos de La Revista de Yucatán, 1921). More recent studies which have begun to unravel the complexities of nineteenth-century Yucatecan politics are Paul Joseph Reid, "The Constitution of Cádiz and the Independence of Yucatán", *The Americas*, 36, 1 (1979), pp.22-38; Beatriz Urías Horcasitas, "Conciencia regional y poder central: Ensayo sobre el pensamiento separatista yucateco en la primera mitad del siglo diecinueve," in Álvaro Matute (ed.), *Estudios de historia moderna y contemporáneo de México* (México: UNAM, 1980), pp.59-84; Alejandra García Quintanilla, "En busca de la prosperidad y la riqueza: Yucatán a la hora de la independencia" in García Quintanilla and Abel Juárez (eds.), *Los lugares y los tiempos. Ensayos sobre las estructuras regionales del siglo XIX en México* (México: Nuestro Tiempo, 1989), pp.83-108; Antonio Betancourt Pérez and José Luis Sierra Villareal, *Yucatán: Una historia compartida* (México: Instituto de Investigaciones Dr. José María Luis Mora, Secretaría de Educación Pública, y Gobierno del Estado de Yucatán, 1989); Betty Luisa de María Auxiliadora Zanolli Fabila, "Liberalismo y Monopolio: Orígenes del federalismo en las tierras del Mayab" (Unpubl. BA Diss., México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1989); Zanolli Fabila, "La alborada del liberalismo yucateco. El I Ayuntamiento Constitucional de Mérida, 1812-1814" (Unpubl. Masters Diss., México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma De México, 1993); Arturo Güemez Piñeda, *Liberalismo en tierras del caminante: Yucatán 1812-1840* (Zamora: El Colegio de Michoacán, 1994); Othón Baños Ramírez (ed.), *Liberalismo, actores y política en Yucatán* (Mérida: Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán, 1995); Melchor Campos García, "La política yucateca en una etapa crisis económica: regionalismo, autonomía y separatismo, 1808-1835" (MA Diss, México: Universidad Autónoma de México, 1995); Terry Rugeley, *Yucatán's Maya Peasantry and the Origins of the Caste War* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996); Melchor Campos García, *Sociabilidades políticas en Yucatán: un estudio sobre los espacios políticos: 1870-1834* (Mérida, Yucatán: UADY, CONACYT, 2000); Campos García "Faccionalismo y votaciones en Yucatán, 1824-1832" in *Historia Mexicana* (July-September 2001); Terry Rugeley, *Of Wonders and Wise Men: Religion and Popular Cultures in Southeast Mexico, 1800-1876* (Texas: University of Texas Press, 2001); Melchor Campos García, *Que los yucatecos todos, proclamen su independencia: historia del secesionismo yucateco, 1821-1849* (Mérida, Yucatán: Ediciones de la UADY 2002); Campos García, *De provincia a estado de la república mexicana: la península de Yucatán, 1786-1835* (Mérida, Yucatán: CONACYT-UADY, 2004); Arturo Güemez Piñeda, *Mayas, gobierno y tierras frente a la acometida liberal en Yucatán, 1812-1847* (Michoacán: El Colegio de Michoacán, Universidad Autónoma de México, 2005); Melchor Campos García and Roger Domínguez Saldivar, *La Diputación provincial en Yucatán, 1812-1823: entre la iniciativa individual y la acción del gobierno* (Mérida, Yucatán: UADY, 2007); Terry Rugeley, *Rebellion now and forever: Mayas, Hispanics, and caste war violence in Yucatán, 1800-1880* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 2009).

⁶⁶ Wells, "Forgotten Chapters", p.201.

it became such a popular instrument to accomplish political change and express political beliefs.

The following chapters will follow a chronological outline and analysis of the *pronunciamientos* in Yucatán from the year of 1821 (Yucatán's first independence) to 1840 (its second independence). This chronological approach has been adopted for several reasons. The Yucatecan *pronunciamientos* evolve throughout the period discussed in terms of motivations, actors, and practice. While in the early 1820s, it was part of a national call for change of the Mexican political system, in the late 1820s and the early 1830s, its aims became increasingly focused on the occupation of local political and military positions. Additionally, there is a constant and growing presence of the military and military force in the exercise, which can only be effectively illustrated through a chronological approach. Finally, the divide between political and regional factions in Yucatán becomes increasingly stark and violent in these early independent years, once more meriting an evolutionary approach. It is thus more useful to employ the chronological approach in order to highlight most effectively how the practice was adopted and changed throughout the period discussed, rather than concentrating on individual aspects and themes.

Chapter Two focuses on the forging of the *pronunciamiento* ideology in Yucatán, along with the first Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* to occur: that of independence in 1821. This chapter serves to demonstrate how insurrection ideology was introduced to the region, and how it applied to the majority of sectors in their bid for independence from Spain. The 1821 *pronunciamiento* was notably part of a larger movement occurring throughout Mexico, thus illustrating the initially national influence on the inspiration of the practice in Yucatán. It also serves to highlight the presence of political ideologies behind the practice from the very beginning, fortifying the argument that the *pronunciamiento* was above all a political expression.

Chapter Three demonstrates the first shift in the phase of the *pronunciamiento*, with it gradually becoming a more regionally than nationally based exercise. It concentrates on the *pronunciamientos* of 1823 (which originated in the regions in protest to the centralist Iturbide administration) which eventually resulted in the establishment of a federal system (emphasizing the presence of a serious and heavy federalist ideology in Yucatán). The section dedicated to the *pronunciamiento* of 1824 (also concentrated on in this chapter) analyses an even deeper sub-level of the *pronunciamiento*, as it became transferred from a regional practice to a more local practice. In this experience, the Campecheans pronounced specifically against the Meridians for refusing to obey Mexican law; so while the reasons behind the *pronunciamiento* were set in the national context of relations between Yucatán and Mexico, the target and demands of the *pronunciamiento* were local.

Chapter Four concentrates on the Campechean-inspired centralist *pronunciamiento* of 1829. Being one of the most extraordinary *pronunciamientos* of early nineteenth-century Yucatán, it signified one of the most significant developments of the *pronunciamiento* with regard to origins, actors, methods to guarantee success, and consequences; hence, it deserves a chapter all unto itself. This chapter will demonstrate that this was the first Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* to not only call for centralism nationally (something undeniably distinct in the Yucatecan case, and the reason behind this will be examined in detail), but it was the first *pronunciamiento* to overthrow the Yucatecan governing administration. It thus indicated the beginning of the dual use of the *pronunciamiento* to simultaneously lobby for national political change, while calling for the dismissal of local authorities. This chapter moreover demonstrates the increasing importance which military force held in this practice, as the military were the main instigators of the *pronunciamiento*, and used their rank and power in order to ensure its success. Nevertheless, the image of the *pronunciamiento* as an exercise led by military caudillos will not be defended, as it will be stressed that the majority of these

army officers were also politicians and merchants. It will be demonstrated that the *pronunciamiento* also involved significant civilian participation, as it was initially heavily motivated by the ideology of the small centralist party in Yucatán.

The illustration of the significance of localism and military force in the *pronunciamiento* provided by Chapter Four then leads naturally to another evolutionary phase of the practice. Chapters Five and Six concentrate on the *pronunciamientos* of 1831 and 1832 (Chapter Five) and on those of 1833, 1834 and 1835 (Chapter Six). These *pronunciamientos* degenerated into predominantly local battles for political power between the federalists and the centralists, as the Meridian *pronunciamientos* of 1831 and 1832 (with the latter successfully demanding federalism) called for the dismissal of the authorities in power. The centralists consequently retaliated, with the Campechean-based *pronunciamientos* of 1833 and 1834 (with that of 1834 attaining victory) having as their objectives the overthrow of the federalists ruling the peninsula, and the establishment of the centralists in their place. Despite the presence of local factionalism, these *pronunciamientos* were all intimately linked to national ideologies of federalism and centralism permeating throughout Mexico (indeed, the *pronunciamiento* of 1835 was part of a larger movement to cement the centralist system in Mexico). Furthermore, rather than depicting these factions as power-hungry and violent, it will become apparent that they had justifiable protection of their interests in mind, along with a steadfast belief in their political ideologies.

This is not to say that the military influence in the *pronunciamiento* will be downplayed; in fact the successful *pronunciamientos* of this period were only victorious because of the power of the military in enforcing the *pronunciamiento*. The *pronunciamiento* of 1834 actually resulted in civil war between the federalist and centralist military. These *pronunciamientos* consequently illustrate the weakness of the governing institutions in the face of powerful military *pronunciados*, as ruling authorities were overthrown in 1829, 1832

and 1834 in the face of powerful military threats or violence. Additionally, while local factors were behind the support for the *pronunciamientos* of 1832 and 1834, their actual instigation depended on powers from without, as they only succeeded because Commander General Francisco de Paula Toro was following orders from brother-in-law President Santa Anna to pronounce. This highlights that while these two *pronunciamientos* were motivated by local factors, their success was still intimately linked with dependence on national ideology and movements (indeed, the *pronunciamiento* of 1829 had failed in its call for centralism as an isolated Yucatecan *pronunciamiento*).

Chapters Two to Six thus illustrate that these *pronunciamientos* were concerned with elite politicking, contained in the major cities of Mérida and Campeche as their politicians, businessmen, and military struggled to retain control of the region. The opinions, ideology, ideas and motivations of an outspoken elite minority dominated these exercises, excluding the lower classes from political practices in the principal cities. Without a doubt, the majority of the population (the Maya) were not educated in political ideologies, and the *ayuntamientos* of the smaller towns were simply there to provide passive support through their *pronunciamientos de adhesión* (indeed, they possessed little fiscal and military resources and were consequently powerless to contest a *pronunciamiento* issued by a major city). Until the mid-1830s, the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* was thus in large part a strictly elite practice.

This was to change in the final *pronunciamiento* discussed in this work and which occupies Chapter Seven: the Santiago Imán revolt of 1836-1840. This was the most outstanding Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* for several reasons; although the Imán revolt began as an elite *pronunciamiento* by the eastern landowner and military figure Santiago Imán (who was protesting against his workers and soldiers being sent to Texas to fight against the secessionist state), it quickly evolved into a popular movement. Imán's protest had also appealed to the soldiers of the east – who in their majority belonged to the *campesino* class –

who themselves did not want to go to Texas. Additionally, Imán coopted the Maya into his movement in order to gain manpower, consequently including their demands in the *pronunciamiento* text. Aside from being the only popularly-motivated *pronunciamiento* to occur in Yucatán during this period, and the only *pronunciamiento* to originate in the east (i.e. not in the major cities of Mérida and Campeche), the Imán revolt was the sole movement to result in Yucatán's complete independence from Mexico, with the region establishing its own constitution for several years. This chapter thus highlights several novel elements concerning the case of exceptionality of the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* in terms of place and purpose of origins, actors, and demands. It also demonstrates that this exceptionality was not to be admitted in Yucatán, as Imán's popular movement would be hijacked by the Meridian federalist political elite, to be used as their own political tool to regain local power from the centralists and secede from Mexico. This *pronunciamiento* finally illustrates the climax of the fragile relations between Yucatán and Mexico which had been developing since independence.

This work will thus reveal the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* not as a national practice engendering instability, but an intensive exercise in political negotiation and representation. Additionally, it will be discovered that the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* was a heavily local practice; *pronunciados* not only used it to lobby for their ideologies of federalism or centralism (with secession as a threat), but used it as an instrument in elite politicking. Indeed, elites used the practice to gain local political power, to control the state treasury, and to implement their own political ideologies and commercial interests. The increasing dominance of the military and military violence in the origin, exercise, and consequences of the practice throughout the period discussed will also emerge, but this work will discourage the traditional definition of the *pronunciamiento* as a military practice, as it will demonstrate that not only was the political-military dichotomy severely blurred, but civilians also had

their own significant parts to play in the practice. Finally, the Yucatecan *pronunciamientos*' dependence on and links with Mexican politics and *pronunciamientos* will demonstrate the permeable and enduring influence of the "mainland" on the peninsula. This will contribute to challenging the theory that Yucatán was one of the more pro-autonomous regions in nineteenth-century Mexico. All these factors will hopefully not only contribute to our definition of what constituted the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento*, but will aid in the understanding of Yucatecan politics, ultimately contributing to one's comprehension of that constantly elusive, fascinating, and maddeningly intriguing picture, which one refers to as nineteenth-century Mexico.

Understanding the *Pronunciamiento*

Los pueblos se gobiernan más por costumbres
que por leyes; así entre nosotros los
pronunciamientos y los gritos
van siendo nuestra ley fundamental.⁶⁷

The *pronunciamiento* was one of the most powerful yet destabilizing political practices of early nineteenth-century Mexico. Through the power of the written word combined with the threatened use of military violence, the *pronunciamiento* was used to address local and national political, economic, and societal grievances, and in so doing, achieve political change (sometimes successful, other times not). It was a fluid and varied practice, which evolved throughout the early nineteenth century, as sectors from across the spectrum of society used and exploited the *pronunciamiento* to represent their voices and opinions, and to negotiate for the changes which they desired. It is thus difficult to establish concrete features and purposes of the *pronunciamiento* in Mexico. Nevertheless, this chapter will attempt to establish a general typology of this phenomenon. Firstly, a systematic critical review of what has been said about the *pronunciamiento* to-date will be provided. This work's interpretation of the *pronunciamiento* will follow, with emphasis on how the exercise conforms with and differs from its traditional historiography. Finally, the particular characteristics of the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* will be established, with stress on how it fits into the typology established, and the ways in which it is distinct from the existing perspectives on the characteristics and purposes of this exercise.

The majority of official dictionary and encyclopaedic sources maintain a standard definition of the *pronunciamiento*: as a military coup. The Real Academia Española for

⁶⁷ *El Regulador Yucateco*, 16 June 1832.

example cites it as an “Alzamiento militar contra el Gobierno, promovido por un jefe del Ejército u otro caudillo,”⁶⁸ while the *Diccionario de historia de España* states it to be a:

Sublevación de un jefe del ejército, que prevalido del mando que ejerce, saca sus tropas a la calle, con objeto de cambiar mediante la violencia o la simple amenaza, la política del Gobierno existente o incluso derribarlo para sustituirlo por otro, generalmente el del propio sublevado.⁶⁹

Granted that the most successful *pronunciamientos* in Spain and Mexico were realised and headed by members of the military, it is understandable that traditional definitions have specified the practice as a military one (or more specifically as one where army officers overpower governing administrations through force in order to gain power). Moreover, with the armed forces being the only institutions that had the means (men and weapons) to present a tangible threat of force if their demands were not attended to, it was only logical that the most successful *pronunciamientos* were realised by the military. This led François-Xavier Guerra to declare that “El documento primigenio de todo *pronunciamiento*, el “plan”, es siempre de origen militar,”⁷⁰ a view which Vázquez has also supported, as she states that Mexican *pronunciamientos* “were, almost in their entirety, launched by the army.”⁷¹ Traditional *pronunciamiento* definitions have also highlighted the intervention of the army in political realms, as the *Diccionario de Historia de España* states the *pronunciamiento* to be an “Injerencia franca y violenta del Ejército o una parte de él en la política interior de la nación empleando la fuerza nacional en beneficio de un partido, un bando, un grupo, un individuo.”⁷² The *Diccionario de la Lengua* upholds this political importance as it explains the *pronunciamiento* to be “Una forma de golpe militar asestado contra el poder para

⁶⁸Real Academia Española, *Diccionario de la lengua española*, vigésima segunda edición, Online, http://buscon.rae.es/draeI/SrvltGUIBusUsual?TIPO_HTML=2&TIPO_BUS=3&LEMA=pronunciamiento.

⁶⁹ Vázquez, “Political Plans and Collaboration between Civilians and the Military, 1821-1846”, *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, Vol.15, No.1, Special Issue: Mexican Politics in the Nineteenth Century (1996), p.20.

⁷⁰ Guerra, “El pronunciamiento”, p.17.

⁷¹ Vázquez, “Political Plans”, p.24.

⁷² Báquer, *El modelo español*, p.33.

introducir en él reformas políticas, propia de la Historia española del siglo XIX.”⁷³ Báquer has also inferred that in this sense the *pronunciamiento* is interpreted as a “Rebeldía de mandos profesionales, propugnada por grupos políticos convencidos de que el gesto de los oficiales, al contar con la adhesión de opinión pública, conducirá, sin daños ni riesgos, a la paz social y a la reforma política”.⁷⁴

This highly militaristic interpretation of *pronunciamientos* has led to historians traditionally classifying it as one of the main causes of political turbulence in nineteenth-century Mexico, as they link and equate it to local and national coup attempts, barrack uprisings, mutinies, insurrections, conspiracies, rebellions, and civil wars. The heavy military presence in Mexican politics and *pronunciamientos* was indeed undeniable; the decade-long War of Independence from 1810-1821 had resulted not only in a militarised society, but a politicised military; military individuals who had been granted powerful titles such as the rank of generals during the war also had significant political control over their territories during that period.⁷⁵ By the time of independence in 1821, military officers had thus become accustomed to exerting their political influence over their regions, using force on several occasions to solve political disputes. Independence was no reason to stop this trend; on the contrary, with the army accomplishing independence through a *pronunciamiento*, they became convinced that this was the standard way to do politics. Consequently, throughout the nineteenth century, the military would become a principal political actor, using the *pronunciamiento* as their main (and only) method to intervene in and direct politics. As Vázquez has noted:

El ejército se atribuyó a la independencia y se autoconstituyó en su garante y, por tanto, con derecho a expresar “la voluntad de la nación.” El prestigio que logró y el

⁷³ Quoted in José Luis Comellas, *Los primeros pronunciamientos en España, 1814-1820* (Madrid: CSIC, 1958), pp.22-23.

⁷⁴ Báquer, *El modelo español*, p.31.

⁷⁵ Christon I. Archer, “Politicization of the Army of New Spain during the War of Independence, 1810-1821”, in Jaime E. Rodríguez O. (ed), *The Origins of Mexican National Politics: 1808-1847* (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, 1997), p.28.

poder que le daba el monopolio del uso de la violencia, hizo que las facciones acudieran a él para promover los cambios políticos ambicionados para proteger sus intereses o sus posiciones ideológicas.⁷⁶

Mexican historians have consequently traditionally perceived the *pronunciamiento* practice to be a widespread and negative military exercise of instability, which toppled and challenged constitutional and lawful authorities, resulting in armed violence, looting, and even civil war.

This chapter will, however, challenge the traditional view that the Mexican *pronunciamiento* was a purely militaristic and unstable practice. While in some cases a *pronunciamiento* indeed did result in a coup (such as in 1828 in Mexico where Vicente Guerrero replaced President Manuel Gómez Pedraza, and in 1829 in Yucatán, where Commander of Arms José Segundo Carvajal overthrew President José Tiburcio López), and the military *realised* almost all successful *pronunciamentos* (provoking instability on a few occasions, such as the civil wars in Mexico in 1832 and in 1834 in Yucatán), the following arguments will be made here: that the *pronunciamiento* was a. An extremely ritualistic and planned exercise, not a spontaneous revolt, b. Not a coup, but a practice of political and forceful negotiation, c. Not a purely military practice, but involved heavy and significant civilian support (with some *pronunciamentos* even being purely civilian practices), and d. It was consequently an instrument demonstrating political representation and the desire for political change from many varied sectors; in this sense it was seen as liberal i.e a tangible form of expressing the “will of the people”. It is necessary to establish these ways in which the *pronunciamiento* differed from its traditional definitions and associations in order to discover its true dynamic which has been misrepresented for decades. Moreover, it is essential to do this in order to explain why both military officers and civilians used the

⁷⁶ Josefina Zoraida Vázquez, “Reflexiones sobre el Ejército y la fundación del Estado mexicano” in Juan Ortiz Escamilla (coord.), *Fuerzas militares en Iberoamérica: siglos XVIII y XIX* (México, D.F.: El Colegio de México; Zamora, Michoacán: El Colegio de Michoacán; Xalapa, Ver., México: Universidad Veracruzana, 2005), p.222.

practice so profusely to effect political change and represent political identity throughout early nineteenth-century Mexico.

The *pronunciamiento* differed from spontaneous *levantamientos* and insurrections primarily in the fact that it was a strikingly ritualistic exercise; the *pronunciamiento* had to follow a specific set of procedures and steps in order to be classified as “a *pronunciamiento*”. Admittedly, although there were slight variations of pattern and process, the procedural steps from start to finish were generally as follows. Disgruntled members of a sector or sectors would seek out support from other individuals in the first and conspiratorial stage known as the *trabajos*. This support could be financially, ideologically, or militarily oriented, and was necessary in order to give the *pronunciamiento* the greatest possible chance at success. *Pronunciados* incorporated potential supporters through underhanded bribery or overt cooption, usually involving promises of personal gain and rewards, often referred to as *compromisos*. Once it was believed that sufficient support had been obtained, all those involved attended a meeting (usually held in a garrison or *ayuntamiento*) where the issues and grievances could be addressed. A secretary was appointed to take the minutes of the meeting, which would constitute the *Acta* of the *pronunciamiento* once it was launched.⁷⁷

The *pronunciamiento* was then written, outlining the conclusions which arose from the meeting, and justifying why it had become necessary to pronounce. It usually claimed that it represented the popular will of the people, and then proceeded to list the demands proposed to rectify the problematic situation. An explicit or veiled threat of more drastic action was typically included, if the requested demands were not met. The signatures of the *pronunciados* then followed, lending an air of potent legitimacy as the text tangibly represented the will of the people. The *grito* was then launched, as the *pronunciamiento* was called out to crowds in the place where it had been formulated, with copies of the plan

⁷⁷ Raymond Carr, *Spain 1808-1939* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1982), p.124; Josefina Zoraida Vázquez, “Political Plans”, p.21.

circulated to important political and military bodies such as state and national administrations, *ayuntamientos*, and garrisons. It was usually published in the press or in pamphlets which were distributed among the public.⁷⁸ This was to ensure that the institution against which the *pronunciados* were protesting would become aware of the *pronunciamiento*, and also in order to gather support from other communities through *pronunciamientos de adhesión* (*pronunciamientos* pledging allegiance to the main *pronunciamiento*). Depending on the strength of support which the *pronunciamiento* was able to gather (in terms of military, political, or ideological support), or its power to intimidate the body to which it was directed, the *pronunciamiento* either triumphed or failed.⁷⁹ A quote from German botanist Karl Heller who was travelling through Yucatán in the 1840s, in the thick of *pronunciamientos*, will support this impression of ritual. In his words, it constituted of:

a procession in the street, which proclaims the change of administration and to which, as everywhere, a mob of the lowest rabble attaches itself. The city, whether it wanted to or not, had to adhere to the new plan, since the revolution emanated from the real ruler, the military.⁸⁰

In a more general definition, Jaime Balmes describes the ritual of *pronunciamiento* as follows:

Se da un grito en un punto cualquiera, se constituye una Junta, se formula un programa, se declara independiente la población pronunciada, y se exhorta a la nación a que imite el ejemplo. La noticia circula, los ánimos se agitan, se pronuncia otra ciudad, y luego otra, y después otra, y al cabo de pocos días se halla el gobierno supremo circunscrito al breve espacio donde puede alcanzar su vista. Obligado a capitular, a abandonar el puesto, suben al poder otros hombres, sale a la luz un manifiesto, las juntas felicitan, el nuevo gobierno les manda que se disuelvan y ellas obedecen, y la función se ha concluido.⁸¹

⁷⁸ Vázquez, “Political Plans”, p.21.

⁷⁹ Fowler, “Introduction” in Fowler (ed.), *Forceful Negotiations: The Origins of the Pronunciamiento in Nineteenth-Century Mexico* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), p.xvii.

⁸⁰ Karl Bartolomeus Heller, *Alone in Mexico: The Astonishing Travels of Karl Heller, 1845-1848*, translated and edited by Terry Rugeley (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2007). p.57.

⁸¹ Jaime Balmes, *Estudios Políticos* (Barcelona: Biblioteca Balmes, 1926), p.14.

These procedures and lengthy preparations constitute one of the aspects which would differentiate the *pronunciamiento* from an otherwise spontaneous and potentially violent *asonada* (protest) or revolt. They also mimicked the prolonged constitutional procedures of parliaments and congress, giving the *pronunciamiento* that semblance of legality and legitimacy which it needed to negotiate with the ruling authorities.

It is important here to highlight the significance of the presence of the *pronunciamiento* text. A *pronunciamiento* was not a *pronunciamiento* without a text; one cannot underestimate the necessity to tangibly imitate constitutional bureaucratic procedures, in order give a sense of validity to the practice. Furthermore, the text served to make the *pronunciamiento*'s ideals and demands seem as impersonal as possible; the more vague the connection with the *pronunciados*, the better. Consequently, when supporters adhered to the *pronunciamiento* they claimed to second the ideals and demands outlined in the text. Moreover, the text was one of the features which signalled that the practice was not a revolt, but a *pronunciamiento*. It consequently demonstrated to all authorities that they were dealing with legitimate negotiating bodies, not unruly rebels. The text thus served to justify an unlawful act. As Fowler has stated, these "formulistic and formulaic procedures, and easily recognizable generic-driven texts" meant that although the *pronunciamiento* could result in, or be part of any one of the insurrectionary tactics listed above, the practice itself was distinct and different because it "followed the prescriptive meta-institutional mould" which came into being in Mexico.⁸²

Additionally, while the *pronunciamiento* was a rebellious act, whether it transformed into rebellion itself is another matter. While some *pronunciamientos* resulted in coups, looting, and civil war, the fact remains that the majority of *pronunciamientos* did not result in

⁸² Will Fowler, "The Origins of the Nineteenth-Century Mexican *Pronunciamiento*: From Rafael de Riego's *Pronunciamiento* of January 1, 1820 to the Women of Zacatlán de las Manzanillas' *Pronunciamiento* of July 29 1833" (Paper presented at the Department of Spanish Research Seminar, University of St Andrews, on Friday 15 February 2008).

any of these events and did not provoke extensive violence. The objective of the *pronunciados* was not to outrightly revolt and overthrow the government, but instead to state in their texts the *threat* of rebellion unless their grievances were heard and rectified. These grievances were not always concerned with toppling the government either; while they could consist of calling for the president or governor to resign from office, they also were complaints about specific administrative or economic policies of the ruling administration, or petitions for a change of political system itself (federalist or centralist). Indeed, the Plans of Casa Mata (1823), Jalapa (1829), and Veracruz (January 1832) did not initially threaten the ruling president, but asked for demands more concerned with the change of the political system. Additionally, they all directly or indirectly *threatened* the use of force if the ruling authorities did not attend to their requests. The Plan of Veracruz in 1832 only resulted in year-long civil war because the national administration refused to grant the *pronunciados*' stipulations (on the contrary, the national army was sent to crush the *pronunciados*). To use Fowler's phrase, the *pronunciamiento* was thus a tool of "forceful negotiation",⁸³ and not outright revolt. Its objective was to instead pressure the government into listening to the *pronunciados*' demands and negotiating with the challengers. In this sense, as Báquer has pointed out, it was a "manifiesto intimidador", a practice of negotiating under intimidation.⁸⁴

The *pronunciamiento* was also not a strictly military practice. Scholars have recently begun to reveal that the Mexican *pronunciamiento* involved not only military participation, but heavy and significant civilian support. Perhaps the most useful study to look at here is that of Vázquez, who stated that *pronunciamientos*:

distaron de ser un fenómeno solo atribuible a los militares, pues casi todos fueron inducidos por civiles, ya fueran comerciantes-usureros extranjeros cosecheros de tabaco y algodón o cónsules-comerciantes extranjeros, que pretendían la eliminación de impuestos o medidas restrictivas, y por políticos e ideólogos que favorecían un cambio de gobierno. Pero como los movimientos fueron siempre encabezados por un

⁸³ See Fowler (ed.), *Forceful Negotiations: The Origins of the Pronunciamiento in Nineteenth-Century Mexico* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2010).

⁸⁴ Báquer, *El modelo español*, p.16.

jefe militar y como éstos para legitimarlas lanzaron manifiestos y planes políticos, solemos atribuirlos erróneamente toda su autoría.⁸⁵

She also adds that *pronunciamientos* were “successful only in the context of a general feeling of unrest amongst the population and, particularly, when they corresponded to civilian initiatives and involved various social groups.”⁸⁶ *Pronunciamientos* – just like elections – did not come cheap; financial backing from civilian actors was essential. The military consequently constantly coopted civilians in order to support their movement. Civilians (politicians and merchants) who also wanted to start a *pronunciamiento* had to incorporate the military in order to realise it. Guerra thus states that a *pronunciamiento* involved:

una diversidad extraordinaria de actores de todo tipo, algunos individuales y la mayoría colectivos, civiles o militares, que van desde los más altos – Congresos de los estados, jefes militares – a los más bajos – ciudades, pueblos de indios, barrios, guarniciones, milicias cívicas, u otros colectivos para la circunstancia.⁸⁷

Other civilian classes such as *campesinos*, barrio inhabitants, and even indigenous groups used the *pronunciamiento*. As Costeloe has stated:

it was used by leading politicians of all parties to demand change at the national political level but it also provided the opportunity for ambitious military officers to achieve promotion, dissatisfied merchants to obtain the repeal of laws, the poor to augment their income with loot, and bandits to legitimize their trade.⁸⁸

These lower classes usually took part in the practice by issuing their own smaller *pronunciamientos* in support of a larger *pronunciamiento*; indeed, one of the chief motives of an original *pronunciamiento* was to garner support manifested in *pronunciamientos de adhesión*. Only when a *pronunciamiento* inspired substantial support through secondary *pronunciamientos* was it considered forceful enough in order to present a valid contestation to the recognised authority. *Pronunciamientos* thus included proclamations of vague, broad, all-encompassing ideals which could appeal to all. When smaller bodies such as

⁸⁵ Vázquez, “Reflexiones sobre el Ejército”, p.220.

⁸⁶ Vázquez, “Political Plans”, p.19.

⁸⁷ Guerra, “El pronunciamiento”, p.17.

⁸⁸ Michael P. Costeloe, “A *Pronunciamiento* in Nineteenth-Century Mexico: ‘15 de julio de 1840’,” *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 4:2 (Summer 1988), p.245.

ayuntamientos, barrios, or merchant groups adhered to the larger *pronunciamiento*, they not only supported its demands, but tacked on their own immediate and concrete concerns to be addressed, thus reshaping it to be a civilian practice in this sense.

Brian Hamnett has also pointed out the importance of collaboration between the military and politicians in the Mexican *pronunciamiento*. He actually asserts that the military was the instrument of political actors, as they (politicians) used the military to realise *pronunciamientos* in order to accomplish political change (instead of carrying out legal and lengthy constitutional procedures). In his words, “La intervención de políticos militares no fue motivada para promover los objetivos del ejército, sino que fue determinada por la naturaleza del conflicto constitucional entre los civiles.”⁸⁹ Fowler is quick to agree in this sense, as he states that the “numerous military interventions that characterized this period were, on the whole, inspired by the constitutional debates and disagreements of the civilians rather than by the alleged predatory praetorianism of the over-rated warring caudillo.”⁹⁰ Jaime E. Rodríguez O. also supports this view, as he believes that in the context of the *pronunciamiento*, “los militares devinieron con frecuencia el instrumento de los grupos políticos civiles.”⁹¹ It is consequently important for one to recognise that even if the *pronunciamiento* was carried out strictly by the army, its demands were not restricted to purely military concerns, but more often than not constituted of political and/or economic demands. Indeed, Juan Ortiz Escamilla has declared that:

The moment the army came to have political and military control of the republic, including control of the state governments, and the different regional political chieftainships/prefectures, it claimed to be the sole owner of national representation

⁸⁹ Brian Hamnett, “Partidos políticos mexicanos e intervención militar, 1823-1855” in Antonio Annino et. al. (eds.), *América Latina: dallo stato coloniale allo stato nazione (1750-1940)*, Vol.II. (Milán: Franco Angeli, 1987), p.574.

⁹⁰ Fowler, *Mexico in the Age*, p.4.

⁹¹ Jaime E. Rodríguez O., “The Origins of the 1832 Rebellion” in Jaime E. Rodríguez O. (ed.), *Patterns of Contention in Mexican History* (Wilmington: SR Books, 1992), p.162.

by way of the *pronunciamiento* as a response to the lack of social order that was perceived to have resulted from popular participation.⁹²

This has led Fowler to insist that in this sense, “No hubo pronunciamientos militaristas.”⁹³

Additionally, one has to keep in mind the extremely blurred dichotomy between what one defines as nineteenth-century Mexican “military” and “civilians”. As Costeloe and Fowler have highlighted, not all military officials were members of a permanent army or lived in barracks; in other words, this was not their only career. There were obviously some who were experienced veterans who entered the profession as cadets and gained rank over the years. As for the rest, they had attained their titles commanding military units during the War of Independence. Many of these figures kept no official attachment to the army subsequent to independence; instead they cultivated their professions as *hacendados*, merchants, and of course, politicians. In Fowler’s words, “many generals were essentially civilians in uniform”⁹⁴; with Costeloe noting that “the military-civilian distinction at this time was blurred, and many senior army officers devoted most of their time and energies to political intrigue rather than military manoeuvres.”⁹⁵ Vázquez also agrees that “la división de civiles y militares no era clara; en casi todas las alianzas, el ejército ponía la fuerza y lo civiles los objetivos y los recursos.”⁹⁶ When it is realized that it was these figures which participated in the *pronunciamiento*, it obliges the re-analysis of the *pronunciamiento* as “a military practice”.

Because the *pronunciamiento* resulted in representing a wide range of interests (political, civil, economic) across the spectrum of society, many regarded it as a truly

⁹² Juan Ortiz Escamilla, “Veracruz: The Determining Region. Military Pronunciamientos in Mexico 1821-1843” in Will Fowler (ed.), *Malcontents, rebels and pronunciados: The Politics of Insurrection in Nineteenth-Century Mexico* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska, in press).

⁹³ Will Fowler, “El pronunciamiento mexicano del siglo XIX. Hacia una nueva tipología”; *Estudios de Historia Moderna y Contemporánea de México*; 38 (July-December 2009), p.12.

⁹⁴ Will Fowler, “Encoded Messages: Deciphering the Nineteenth-Century Mexican *Pronunciamiento*”, (Paper presented at the Cambridge Hispanic Research Seminar held at Clare College, University of Cambridge, Wednesday 21 January 2009).

⁹⁵ Costeloe, *The Central Republic*, p.15.

⁹⁶ Vázquez, “Reflexiones sobre el Ejército”, p.230.

representative practice at the time, not as a power grabbing coup d'état by a military minority. Indeed, one of the main bases of the *pronunciamiento*'s legitimacy, equality with, and sometimes superiority to constitutional and governing institutions was its self-proclaiming purpose to represent the genuine "will of the people." This representation was perceived to be more than sufficient reason in order to question and challenge the power of the established authorities in a legitimate manner. According to Vázquez, in this context "Los gobernantes son cuestionados o rechazados porque son "personajes que condena la opinión pública," with Guerra highlighting that the text of the *pronunciamiento* contained "un registro dramático, lleno de superlativos para designar la opresión, los abusos, los peligros."⁹⁷ When a *pronunciamiento* had military involvement, the army officers thus justified their actions by claiming to be taking a necessary intervention in order to save the people of its *patria* from a tyrannical or unjust ruling institution. This has led Raymond Carr to comment that the "officer corps (was) the ultimate repository of a general will [...] salvaged by the heroic gesture of a general,"⁹⁸ with Guerra adding that "El pronunciamiento es una forma de reacción a un poder opresor o la manifestación última del poder constituyente de la nación."⁹⁹ José Luis Comellas has also agreed that a *pronunciamiento* is a practice whereby "se alza contra una tiranía insoportable, oprobiosa."¹⁰⁰ One should note that this tangible duty of the *pronunciados* voicing the will of the people was necessary to justify the act of challenging authorities; it transformed the *pronunciamiento* into a self-sacrificing necessary action which the *pronunciados* had to take in order to ensure the happiness of the people. According to Guerra, the *pronunciados* thus evoked "la verdadera voluntad de los pueblos" in order to "justificar la acción,"¹⁰¹ with Báquer adding that "en el pronunciamiento, a diferencia del simple golpe de Estado, una apelación a la opinión pública" was needed "para justificar el

⁹⁷ Guerra, "El pronunciamiento", p.17.

⁹⁸ Carr, *Spain 1808-1939*, p.124.

⁹⁹ Guerra, "El pronunciamiento", p.16.

¹⁰⁰ Comellas, *Los primeros pronunciamientos*, p.26.

¹⁰¹ Guerra, "El pronunciamiento", p.22.

acto con supuestas aspiraciones.”¹⁰² Vázquez has also asserted that “el *pronunciamiento* no es un golpe de Estado, ya que busca legitimarse como expresión de la voluntad pública.”¹⁰³

While Fowler does not deny that one of the main elements needed for a *pronunciamiento* to arise was an oppressive administration, he is more inclined to think that a fragile and weak ruling institution was the main basis for “the will of the people” to be able to effectively challenge it. According to him, the ruling administrations had to manifest some sign of weakness or vulnerability, in order for *pronunciados* to capitalize on this fragility. He sees this exemplified in the very first successful Spanish *pronunciamiento* of Rafael de Riego in 1820. The overthrow of Ferdinand VII by the Napoleonic army had led to the exposure of the extreme vulnerability of the monarchy, and Spain was consequently plunged into instability, crisis of authority and opposition to the French King Joseph Bonaparte (and subsequently to Ferdinand himself); this was the time when *pronunciamientos* arose. These circumstances not only legitimised *pronunciados*’ actions, but made it more possible for them to issue a successful *pronunciamiento*, as it was easier to target a weak institution which they could overpower through the “right to insurrection”,¹⁰⁴ in order to “save the *patria*.”¹⁰⁵ It was thus seen as the army taking the necessary (and heroic) steps to manage a country effectively where political institutions could not. In Fowler’s words:

the constitutional crisis unleashed by the Napoleonic occupation of the Iberian peninsula in 1808 and the usurpation of the Spanish crown [...] undoubtedly created a context of upheaval and disputed authority, raising fundamental questions about the ruling bodies’ legitimacy [...] [it] highlighted the extent to which authority was actually an incredibly fragile construct [...] Authority was now in the eye of the beholder. It could be questioned, challenged, overcome, and ultimately appropriated.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² Báquer, *El modelo español*, pp.33-34.

¹⁰³ Josefina Zoraida Vázquez, “El modelo de pronunciamiento mexicano, 1820-1823,” *Ulúa* 7 (January-June 2006), p.31.

¹⁰⁴ Alfonso Noriega, *El pensamiento conservador y el conservadurismo mexicano*, Tomo I (Mexico City: UNAM, 1993), p.153.

¹⁰⁵ Stanley G. Payne, *Politics and the Military in Modern Spain* (Stanford U.P; Oxford U.P, 1967), pp.14-30.

¹⁰⁶ Fowler, “Introduction”, p.xxv.

For many historians, these liberal origins of the *pronunciamiento* lie within the creation of the Masonic lodges in Spain during the 1810s and 20s.¹⁰⁷ The Napoleonic invasion of Spain in 1808, and the subsequent replacement of King Ferdinand VII by Joseph Bonaparte inspired the formation of Masonic lodges and juntas by the majority of the liberals who were in opposition not only to the French king, but more importantly, to absolutism. This liberal agenda was furthermore manifested in the Constitution of Cádiz of 1812-1814, which empowered the provincial juntas to represent their self-government and representation against Joseph, fostering the legitimacy of the *voluntad popular*; the written and spoken form of the people as a valid contestation to authority was thus formed. The expression of the *voluntad del pueblo* and the belief that they had the right to insurrection and to contest the official authority of the nation consequently has deep-rooted connections to this period in Spain. In this aspect, Comellas maintains that all Spanish *pronunciamientos* were significantly liberal,¹⁰⁸ a perspective which is supported by Carr who believes that “The [Spanish] *pronunciamiento* was the instrument of liberal revolution in the nineteenth century.”¹⁰⁹

With Ferdinand’s return to the throne in 1814 and his subsequent harsh repression of liberal activity (including the abolishment of the Constitution of Cádiz), liberal opposition to his tyranny increased substantially. Resistance to the crown occurred within another important sector: the Spanish militias. Indeed, many military officers were not happy with measures taken by Ferdinand from 1814-1820. While *ancien régime* guards who had battled against the French had been awarded promotions, the young officers who had also dedicated their efforts in the war had not been recognised for their efforts, and as a result they began plotting against the throne. Indeed, it had been realised through the French invasion that if a

¹⁰⁷ Vázquez, “Political Plans”, p.22; Comellas, *Los primeros pronunciamientos*, pp.28-29; Carr, *Spain 1808-1939*, pp.126-129.

¹⁰⁸ Comellas, *Los primeros pronunciamientos*, p.24.

¹⁰⁹ Carr, *Spain: 1808-1975*, p.124.

foreign army could so easily overtake the kingdom, then why could not a home-grown army do the same? The fragility of the throne had been exposed, and the military would be quick to capitalise on it. Authority was, in Fowler's words, "there for the taking."¹¹⁰ Uprisings by General Francisco Espoz y Mina in Pamplona (1814), of Marshal Juan Díaz Porlier in La Coruña (1815), the *Conspiración del Triángulo* in Madrid (1816), of General Luis Lacy in Barcelona (1817) and of Colonel Joaquín Vidal in Valencia (1819) all demonstrated the rising questioning and contestation of the legitimacy and power of the king, as liberals and military worked together in these protestations.¹¹¹

These revolts paved the way for the *pronunciamiento* which would triumph above them all: that of Lieutenant Colonel Rafael de Riego on 1 January 1820. It has been widely agreed that Riego was *the* originator of the *pronunciamiento*. It was he who first used the term "*pronunciamiento*"¹¹² and it was he who set the highly specific model and ritual of events which would begin the characterization of the practice of this phenomenon. Riego and his men had extremely immediate concerns: they were destined to be sent to the Americas to battle the raging insurgency there; none of them wanted to go.¹¹³ Riego and his followers thus pronounced in the town of Cabezas de San Juan, in the province of Seville at the beginning of 1820. With the support of the military and the liberal juntas based throughout the country, Riego's *pronunciamiento* was a resounding success, as the *pronunciados* demanded the reestablishment of the 1812 Constitution and the re-assemblance of the *Cortes*, which the King eventually granted.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ Fowler, "Introduction", p.xxv.

¹¹¹ Roberto L. Blanco Valdés, "Paisanos y soldados en los orígenes de la España liberal: Sobre revoluciones, golpes de estado y pronunciamientos militares" in Jaime E. Rodríguez O. (ed.), *Las nuevas naciones: España y México 1800-1850* (Madrid: Fundación Mapfre, 2008), p.270.

¹¹² Comellas, *Los primeros pronunciamientos*, p.21.

¹¹³ Eric Christiansen, *The Origins of Military Power in Spain* (London : Oxford U.P., 1967), p.2.

¹¹⁴ Ivana Frasquet and Manuel Chust, "Agustín de Iturbide: From the *Pronunciamiento* of Iguala to the Coup of 1822", in Fowler (ed.), *Forceful Negotiations*, pp.24-26.

The ways in which the *pronunciamiento* differs from its traditional definitions and associations have been established. Fowler sums it up well, as according to him “in reality it was not always a military action, it was generally *not* concerned with overthrowing the government, and, quite frequently, it was *not* a response to a development in national politics.”¹¹⁵ The extent and significance of the role of the *pronunciamiento* with regard to moulding the socio-political system in Mexico and in Yucatán will now be determined. How popular and how significant was this practice in early nineteenth-century Mexico, and more importantly, why? Additionally the specific characteristics of the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* will be established, in order to determine how it conformed with or differed from this newly established framework.

According to Guerra, the *pronunciamiento* is “un fenómeno que, por su recurrencia, tiene que ser considerado como una de las prácticas políticas más importantes del siglo XIX.”¹¹⁶ Indeed, between independence in 1821 and the 1876 Plan of Tuxtepec which brought Porfirio Díaz into power, more than 1500 *pronunciamientos* erupted throughout the newly born Mexican nation, making it “la norma y no la excepción.”¹¹⁷ All sectors and classes of society used the practice to such an extent that it rapidly became the most popular and accepted form of expressing opinion and discontent, as well as negotiating for political change. Yucatán was no exception to this *pronunciamiento* mania, as during the years 1821 to 1840 alone, more than 50 *pronunciamientos* occurred in the south-eastern peninsula.

Not only was the nation gripped by *pronunciamiento* fever during this period, but *pronunciamientos* were also responsible for bringing about the most significant political changes in Mexico and Yucatán. Although the majority of *pronunciamientos* did not succeed on a national (and often even regional) level,¹¹⁸ those that did were responsible for the most

¹¹⁵ Will Fowler, “Preface”, in *Forceful Negotiations*, p.viii..

¹¹⁶ Guerra, “El pronunciamiento”, p.15.

¹¹⁷ Fowler, “El pronunciamiento mexicano”, p.12.

¹¹⁸ Vázquez, “Political Plans”, pp.21-22.

significant changes in politics in Mexico and Yucatán. Mexico became independent through Agustín de Iturbide's *pronunciamiento* of the Plan of Iguala in 1821. The *pronunciamientos* of the Plans of Veracruz and Casa Mata of 1822 and 1823 respectively were responsible for terminating Iturbide's Empire, which ushered in the federal republic. *Pronunciamientos* also ended the administrations of Manuel Gómez Pedraza (1828), Vicente Guerrero (1829), Anastasio Bustamante (1832 and 1841), Valentín Gómez Farías (1834), and Antonio López de Santa Anna (1844).¹¹⁹ Furthermore, the independence of states from Mexico (such as Texas in 1836 and Yucatán in 1840) was declared through *pronunciamientos*. It is therefore obvious that while there were constantly legal procedures which attempted to establish the political system of the nation (such as elections and constitutions), the *pronunciamiento* was the practice which continued to interrupt lawful rule, and ultimately dominated the face of regional and national politics.

How did this Mexican *pronunciamiento* mania come about? One cannot underestimate the importance and impact which Riego's *pronunciamiento* of 1820 in Spain had on Mexican politics. Riego's triumph firstly proved that this kind of dynamic worked in these circumstances; not only did Mexicans eagerly reinstitute the 1812 Constitution of Cádiz in 1820, but they became highly aware of what an extreme degree of success and political change a *pronunciamiento* could bring about. Elections of those of New Spain to attend the liberal *Cortes* in Spain, along with the establishment of the Provincial Deputations and the *ayuntamientos* (both also created by the Constitution of Cádiz) had all awakened the desire for self-rule.¹²⁰ Indeed, the Mexican War of Independence had been raging since Miguel Hidalgo's *grito de libertad* in 1810. So far, Mexicans had copied and instigated every political practice that had been present in their motherland Spain. Why not do the same for the *pronunciamiento*? Those impatient for home rule would thus imitate Riego's example

¹¹⁹ Fowler, "Introduction" in Fowler (ed.), *Forceful Negotiations*, pp.xxii-xxiii.

¹²⁰ Jaime E. Rodríguez O., "Introduction" in Jaime E. Rodríguez O. (ed), *The Origins of Mexican National Politics 1808-1847* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1997), pp.5-6.

with their own *pronunciamiento*: the Plan of Iguala of 24 February 1821. Led by former royalist officer Agustín de Iturbide, the plan would lead to the independence of the nation. With the proclamation of the three guarantees of religion, independence and unity, the extensively thought-out document managed to unite vast territories in the name of a Mexican Empire. From Texas in the north to Guatemala in the south, provinces adhered with startling rapidity to the Plan. It is nothing short of remarkable that one *pronunciamiento* brought about what a decade-long war could not.

The influence of the very first *pronunciamiento* in Spanish America, on such a grand scale, and with such a magnitude of success, needs to be highlighted. This was something of a trendsetting event which *pronunciados* would follow hundreds of times on the national and regional levels throughout the following decades in Mexico. Riego's and Iturbide's *pronunciamientos* had demonstrated that a *pronunciamiento* could not only force a King to change his policies, but could lead to independence. The success of the latter had also demonstrated to all the importance of the *pronunciamiento*'s ritual with regard to guaranteeing success. Iturbide had conspired with and gathered support from strategic army officers before issuing his plan, in order to ensure that he would have their support. The *pronunciados* had recorded the minutes of the *pronunciamiento* meeting in the town of Iguala in Guerrero, subsequent to which they wrote and signed the *pronunciamiento*. They then issued the *grito*, circulating copies of the *pronunciamiento* text to all the key authorities of the nation.¹²¹

The success of these first and groundbreaking *pronunciamientos* not only revealed the particular steps which a *pronunciamiento* should follow, but also demonstrated that many more personal gains were to be had through this practice. Not only could it result in political change on a grand scale, but it could considerably heighten the status and position of the

¹²¹ Fowler, "Introduction", p.xxii-xxiii.

pronunciados. Riego was converted from a young discontented officer to a national hero after the success of his *pronunciamiento*, eventually being elected president of the *Cortes*.¹²² Through the Plan of Iguala, Iturbide eventually became Emperor of the largest nation on the planet at the time.¹²³ The military thus took note; not only could they use a *pronunciamiento* to effect change in their favour, but they could use it for extreme personal benefit. In Fowler's words:

The heady mix of liberal causes such as constitutionalism, freedom, and independence, paired with the adrenaline rush of the *grito* and the hope of an outcome that could include personal aggrandizement as well as military and political promotion, made the experience of the *pronunciamiento* into an irresistible and addictive practice for most politically-minded nineteenth-century Mexican soldiers.¹²⁴

Many were thus eager to share the fruits of this novel practice of the *pronunciamiento*; members of the military who had been denied promotion during Iturbide's reign, as well as the regional elites did not intend to be excluded. Indeed, during the period 1822-1823, powerful regional circles became increasingly discontented with the policies of Iturbide's centralist empire, as the constant interference by the government in their provincial affairs (political and economic) was disrupting their first taste at independent home rule. The cluster of *pronunciamientos* by Antonio López de Santa Anna in Veracruz (1822) paved the way for General José Antonio Echávarri's *Plan de Casa Mata*, which was a resounding success as the regions seconded it, or more specifically, seconded Article Nine, which empowered the Provincial Deputations, meaning temporary home rule for the provinces.¹²⁵ These *pronunciamientos* set the example for the first time in Mexico that *pronunciamientos* did not have to be against a regal power, but could entail negotiation for political change between the regions and Mexico City. The widespread success of Echávarri's

¹²² Christiansen, *The Origins*, p.23.

¹²³ Timothy E. Anna, "Iguala: The Prototype", in Fowler (ed.), *Forceful Negotiations*, p.15.

¹²⁴ Fowler, "Introduction", p.xxix.

¹²⁵ Nettie Lee Benson, "The Plan of Casa Mata", *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, Volume 25, Issue 1 (Feb., 1945), p.49.

pronunciamiento led to Iturbide's abdication and the eventual creation of the first federal republic in Mexico.

The regional *pronunciamientos* of 1822 and 1823 sealed the practice of the *pronunciamiento* as a firm and dominant element of political practice in nineteenth-century Mexico. The *pronunciamiento* was now responsible for independence, the end of the empire, and ultimately the establishment of federalism. In the words of Anna, "The reason the *pronunciamiento* became the preferred instrument for fundamental political change is that it worked, at least the first ones did."¹²⁶ There was now no question that there could be a more successful mechanism for political negotiation and change, especially for the regions. Anna also makes the important observation that by 1823, Mexicans now had more experience in the practice of the *pronunciamiento* than they had ever had in direct elections.¹²⁷ Additionally, the regional powers awoke to the realisation that the *pronunciamiento* was an effective mechanism which could (successfully) be used concerning representation towards and forceful negotiation with the centre. Yucatecan elites would pay attention to these early events very closely, and learn well.

According to Fowler, the Mexican *pronunciamiento* was "first and foremost, a regional-led practice [and] [...] became the favourite political practice of the provincial elites."¹²⁸ Yucatecan *pronunciados* were no exception to this statement. The particular relationship between Yucatán and Mexico is of great importance regarding the motivations behind the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento*. Throughout the colonial era, the Yucatecan peninsula traditionally had a distant relationship with New Spain. Yucatán's inhabitants and authorities implemented their own political and economic agendas without outside interference, and the only political connection that Yucatán had with New Spain was its dependence on the latter's judicial court. The political decrees of the Bourbon reforms and

¹²⁶ Anna, "Iguala: The Prototype", p.19.

¹²⁷ Ibid., p.17.

¹²⁸ Fowler, "Introduction", p.xxxi.

the Constitution of Cádiz (which made Yucatán into a *diputación provincial* completely separate from those in New Spain) empowered the Yucatecan regional powers even further. With the advent of independence and the subsequent union with Mexico, regional elites had no intention of releasing their political and financial control in their territories. It was consequently difficult for *yucatecos* to become used to the idea that they now had a national administration to which they had to answer. Nevertheless, the centralist Iturbide Empire, along with subsequent Mexican administrations, would constantly try to reassert their agendas and decrees on the authorities of the peninsula.

This clash of attitudes would trigger fluctuating relations between the periphery and mainland Mexico for decades to come. With the firm establishment of the *pronunciamiento* trend (and especially the regional *pronunciamiento* trend) by 1823, Yucatecans would follow this practice in their dealings, protests, support, and negotiations with Mexican administrations. It is undeniable that political and economic decisions in Mexico heavily affected the Yucatecan elite. Thus, every single major Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* during this era heavily concentrated on the distinctly *local* effects which the Mexican administration's decisions and decrees had on various sectors in the peninsula (mainly the political and economic elite and the military). This is precisely why the Yucatecan case is so interesting. It is a novelty to analyse how the influential figures in this initially peripheral territory responded to a centre which suddenly claimed possession over it and all its internal workings, using the *pronunciamiento* to defend their local interests and concerns.

One of the primary uses of the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* was to change the nature of the peninsula's relationship with Mexico throughout the early nineteenth century. Indeed, during this era the Yucatecan *pronunciamientos* became the signposts of relations between these two regions. The administrative bodies in Yucatán seconded the Plan of Iguala and Independence (1821), and they were one of the first bodies in the Mexican nation to second

the plan of Casa Mata, subsequently pressuring the temporary congress to establish a federalist system (1823), which occurred in 1824. The 1829 *pronunciamiento* was originally motivated by a small centralist faction in the region, thus calling for the change from a federal to centralist political system. In 1832, Francisco de Paula Toro and his military followers seconded Santa Anna's *pronunciamiento* of Veracruz, one of a series of *pronunciamientos* throughout Mexico which would lead to the end of the elitist administration of Anastasio Bustamante. The 1834 *pronunciamiento* led by Toro and his supporters once more, demanded the end of the radical Valentín Gómez Farías administration, with the same *pronunciados* demanding a centralist administration in 1835 (it should be noted that these *pronunciamientos*, while containing some Yucatecan sentiment, were in large part only implemented because Toro was following orders from his brother-in-law and President Santa Anna). The largest Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* of the century, the Santiago Imán revolt (1836-1840) was launched throughout the eastern populations of the peninsula (mainly the towns of Tizimín, Espita, Sotuta, and the city of Valladolid), and was seconded by both Meridians and Campecheans, demanding federalism, and resulting in Yucatán's independence from Mexico.

These *pronunciamientos* are perfect exemplifications of the typical regional *pronunciamiento*: the assertion and defence of regional necessities, identities, and demands are clear.¹²⁹ They also can be classed as regional *pronunciamientos* in more explicit ways. Firstly, although it seems from the summary above that the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* was exploited as a quick method of "legitimately" proclaiming secession from Mexico, (according to the political conditions at the time), this was not the case. In almost every *pronunciamiento*, the Yucatecan *pronunciados* sought to *negotiate* with Mexico for a change of national administration. This is an essential element of not only the regional

¹²⁹ The centralist *pronunciamiento* of 1829 contained, as shall be discovered, ulterior separatist motives. Those of 1834 and 1835 were direct orders from Santa Anna to Yucatecan-based Commander General Francisco de Paula Toro to second the movement for centralism which was occurring throughout the country.

pronunciamiento, but of the *pronunciamiento* in general. It was not a revolt or uprising seeking quick means: it was a tool of forceful negotiation which was used to try and reason with powers in order to reach a compromise and achieve change. Thus, the 1823 *pronunciamientos* threatened Yucatecan separation until a federalist administration was in place. The 1829 *pronunciamiento* declared that Yucatán was seceding from Mexico and that reunification would not occur until the establishment of a national centralist administration (as will be suggested in Chapter Three, this was the one instance of pretence at negotiation, as there were real secessionist desires by a small faction at hand, but it was present in the *pronunciamiento* text nevertheless). The 1840 *pronunciamiento* included the condition that Yucatán was separating from Mexico until federalism was implemented once more. It was only due to the refusal of the governing Mexican administrations to recognise these demands that the *pronunciados* were left with the only option of secession for a much longer period of time than intended (from 1829-1832 and then from 1840-1843). In other words, all the attempts of the Yucatecan elite to bargain with the Mexican government did not succeed, and these *pronunciamientos* became examples of threats which were not meant to go this far, but which were eventually forced to be taken.

This failure at Yucatecan negotiation was in part because the state was poor in resources and arms; it did not have the significant power needed to convincingly bargain with the Mexican administration (and Mexico City did not have the resources to go to Yucatán, fight, and be victorious as well, as would be demonstrated in the failure of the Mexican invasion of Yucatán in 1843). Usually *pronunciamientos* were accompanied by a threat of violence if their demands were not listened to; *yucatecos* could not do this, simply because they did not have the resources or the men, and also because of the vast geographical distance from the centre. It was not logical for a peripheral state to militarily threaten a centre more than 1,000 kilometres away. It was, however, logical for an isolated state to use the threat of

secession, perhaps its only weapon. Additionally, because Yucatecans' demands were so localised, and because of the solitary nature of the region itself, it was highly unlikely that any *pronunciamientos de adhesión* from any other regions of Mexico would lend support, strength, and legitimacy to the cause of the *yucatecos*.

What needs to be noted here is that in most cases, Yucatecans were thus not looking to secede, but to unite with Mexico under terms and conditions favourable to them. The region was simply too poor in resources to exist on its own; financial dependence made unification with Mexico a necessity. This is not to say that the secessionist dream did not exist among an elite minority; as will be discovered, some of the elite merchants of Yucatán (and of Mérida in particular) harboured dreams of reuniting with Spain and thus re-establishing trade relations with Cuba (demonstrated in the planned *pronunciamiento* of December 1823, and the *pronunciamiento* of 1829, with separatists hijacking the centralist *pronunciamiento* and using it for their own secessionist desires). Nevertheless, in several cases, such as in the *pronunciamientos* of April 1823 and the Imán revolt of 1840, secessionism was used as a negotiating tool, with federalism being the real desire of the *pronunciados*.

The struggle between political ideologies is more than apparent in these Yucatecan *pronunciamientos*. The 1823, 1832 and 1836-1840 *pronunciamientos* were all motivated by federalist desires, and the 1829 and 1835 *pronunciamientos* were centralist. This was only a microcosm of the ideological split which was dividing Mexico. The political vacuum left by the end of Spanish rule and Iturbide's Empire led to attempts to establish the "appropriate" Mexican political system throughout the early nineteenth century, whether it be federalist or centralist. In Yucatán, the liberal Liga and elite Camarilla coalitions were mainly federalist (and a small faction of *camarilleros* were even secessionist at times) throughout the 1820s. The centralist faction was formed in 1829 among the Campechean elite (in response to the

regionalist desires which marked the Meridian political class) in order to preserve the peninsula's relationship with Mexico (and thus the essential trade links which Campechean merchants had with Mexican ports). In the early 1830s, this centralist coalition would expand to include many *hombres de bien* of the Camarilla who were uneasy about the radicalism of the Gómez Farías administration. With the central government of Anastasio Bustamante of 1836, however, the majority of the Yucatecan political and merchant class reverted to federalism in response to the centralist intrusion in terms of politics and economy.

The majority of regional *pronunciamientos* throughout Mexico thus demanded either a federalist or centralist system according to the actors and political circumstances and momentum at the time. Federalist desires dominated; one of the distinguishing features of Yucatán was its elites' pursuit of relative autonomy in order to mainly issue beneficial trade terms, as well as gain control over state revenues. This is not to say that Yucatecans were pro-autonomous; the fact that in the majority of Yucatecan *pronunciamientos* (1823, 1832 and 1846), the Mexican theme dominated, with demands for a federalist system (and not Yucatecan autonomy), disproves this theory. Sometimes, some actors switched ideals according to their views and responses to changing circumstances, so that the same people were found pronouncing for both federalism and then centralism. Indeed, José Ortega y Gasset has argued that the *pronunciados* always fully believed in the political ideals which they proclaimed (or in his words “estaban convencidos de su ‘idea’, no como está convencido un hombre normal, sino como suelen los locos y los imbéciles.”).¹³⁰ There is no doubt that a small number of these *pronunciados* were *chaqueteros* or turncoats, who flitted from one side to another in order to ensure that they were included in the winning *pronunciamiento* (as shall later be discovered), but the majority seemed to genuinely uphold their political ideals. Whatever the case may be, in the more general picture, Fowler was right to observe that “the

¹³⁰ José Ortega y Gasset, *España invertebrada: bosquejos de algunos pensamientos históricos* (Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1971), p.87.

great majority of the *pronunciamientos* that surfaced during this period were inspired either by the centralising or the federalising shifts of the different governments that came to power between 1821 and 1857.”¹³¹ It seems that Yucatán was no exception to this.

The Yucatecan *pronunciamientos* were nevertheless not solely state-level expressions of discontent or exercises of negotiation. While indeed national issues did have a significant influence on the formation and character of the Yucatecan *pronunciamientos*, there were also many more local forces and objectives at hand. It will be suggested that the more significant dividing line in these *pronunciamientos* was the inter-regional struggle for governing positions in the peninsula. This is not to say that political ideologies were not present; each faction desiring power in the peninsula had its own concrete ideas and ideals of what would bring stability to the peninsula and beneficial relations with Mexico; thus the *pronunciamiento* was indeed still the embodiment of “la lucha de ideologías”.¹³² Yucatecan political ideologies were connected to those of Mexico, and Yucatecans were also financially dependent on Mexican markets and economic aid to sponsor their coastal defences (indeed, Yucatán was prone to pirate attacks due to their extensive coastline, and would constantly need financial support to assist in its defence). Nevertheless, Yucatecans also needed to preserve their beneficial economic and political practices to which they had become accustomed after centuries of almost independent rule. What dominated the push behind the *pronunciamiento* was thus the *local* need for power by these factions in order to implement the measures and decrees benefitting their specific elite group. It is necessary to illustrate this point by analyzing the major *pronunciamientos* during this period even further.

¹³¹ Fowler, “Civil Conflict”, p.60.

¹³² Ernesto de la Torre Villar, “Introducción general” in Guadalupe Jiménez Codinach (ed.), *Planes en la nación Mexicana. Libro uno: 1808-1830* (Mexico City: Senado de la República/El Colegio de México, 1987), p.22. Indeed, Vázquez asserts that although there were a relatively small but significant number of pro-independence individuals in Yucatán, “el grupo mayoritario era simplemente federalista.” See Josefina Zoraida Vázquez, “Introducción” in Guadalupe Jiménez Codinach (ed.), *Planes en la nación Mexicana. Libro dos: 1831-1834* (Mexico City: Senado de la República/El Colegio de México, 1987), p.34.

From the very first *pronunciamiento* to occur in Yucatán – the 1821 *pronunciamiento de adhesión* for independence – this inter-state battle was apparent. Although the Yucatecans seconded the Mexican Plan of Iguala, the elite Camarilla faction (which issued the *pronunciamiento* after military mutiny arose in Campeche) which dominated the Provincial Deputation subsequently made no move to unite with Mexico, in order to maintain their economic and administrative autonomy. The *camarilleros* thus designed this *pronunciamiento* to serve their local needs. The 1823 *pronunciamiento de adhesión* to the Plan of Casa Mata was in itself not only a rejection of the Iturbide Empire, but also a way for the *camarillero* elite to regain the control over local politics and economy which they had lost during the centralist Iturbide Empire. Although the 1829 Campechean *pronunciamiento* pronounced for centralism, it was provoked by much more concrete factors; the active battalions and regular army suffering from low salaries worked in alliance with the centralist as well as the Camarilla party (the latter's members had been defeated in the 1825 elections by the rival Liga party) in order not only to change the political system, but to overthrow the governing Liga faction.¹³³ In fact, Betty Zanolli Fabila suggests that one of the primary aims of the *camarilleros* in this *pronunciamiento* was to overthrow the internal administration,¹³⁴ while the centralists genuinely wanted a change of administration. Indeed, the *Camarilla* party were actually ardent federalists, and even separatist to a degree, as shall be discovered.

The Meridian-based 1832 *pronunciamiento*, led by Yucatecan Commander General Francisco de Paula Toro, although supporting Santa Anna's *pronunciamiento* in Veracruz against the Bustamante administration, also demanded the (successful) re-establishment of the Liga authorities in local government, as they regained the power which they had lost to

¹³³ The Camarilla party was constituted of the most elite business, military, political and ecclesiastic members of Yucatecan society. Meanwhile, the Liga party was made up of liberals and businessmen in its majority. Both parties included members from Mérida and Campeche, with Meridians dominating in the Camarilla party, and Campecheans more heavily present in the Liga party. Further discussion of these parties will be in the subsequent chapters.

¹³⁴ Betty Luisa de María Auxiliadora Zanolli Fabila, "Liberalismo y Monopolio: Orígenes del federalismo en las tierras del Mayab" (Unpubl. BA diss., Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1989), p.408.

the Camarilla in 1829.¹³⁵ The *camarilleros* and centralists retaliated in 1834 and 1835; headed by the same *comandante general* Toro they simultaneously and successfully pronounced for centralism and the dismissal of the Liga administration. Even the Santiago Imán revolt of 1840 was not just a rejection of the centralist administration, but was part of a plot by the then-formed party of federalists to take over power from the centralists in the peninsula. The Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* was thus a practice which, in Fowler's words "empowered the disempowered,"¹³⁶ and in this one aspect, it was a regional coup.

It consequently becomes evident that local power struggles were as equally dominant in these major Yucatecan *pronunciamientos* as negotiation tactics with Mexico. With the exception of the *pronunciamiento* of 1823 which successfully lobbied for federalism, no isolated Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* (i.e. not part of a national movement) accomplished its aims when attempting to negotiate with Mexico (1821, 1829, and 1840). Regardless of the national failing of the *pronunciamiento*, the *pronunciados* still did not hesitate to make the *pronunciamiento* triumph locally, overthrowing the Yucatecan government, and subsequently proclaiming their *pronunciamiento* to be a victory. Also, they always ended up reuniting with Mexico sooner or later anyway. It evidently seems that the local battle for the possession of elite political roles was equally or even more important than Yucatán's relationship with Mexico.

This idea of local issues dominating regional objectives in the *pronunciamiento* is highlighted in many ways, especially concerning the *pronunciamiento* text. Several historians such as Fowler¹³⁷ and Kerry McDonald¹³⁸ have highlighted the importance of the "metatext" in the regional *pronunciamiento*, whereby the regional elites (the *pronunciados*) had ulterior

¹³⁵Eligio Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán desde la época más remota hasta nuestros días* Tomo III (Mérida, Yucatán: Imprenta de M. Heredia Argüelles, 1879), p.337.

¹³⁶Fowler, "I Pronounce Thus I Exist", in Fowler (ed.), *Forceful Negotiations*, p.258.

¹³⁷*Ibid*, p.262.

¹³⁸ Kerry McDonald, "The Origins of the *Pronunciamientos* of San Luis Potosí: An Overview", in Fowler (ed.), *Forceful Negotiations*, p.101.

motives from what was actually stated in their *pronunciamiento* text. In other words, while the *pronunciados* had regional demands in their *pronunciamientos*, they had much more *local* unstated objectives and ambitions (the metatext) which they hoped to achieve through the *pronunciamiento*. As a result, national trends and even national *pronunciamientos* were “hijacked” to secretly achieve local objectives. This was not the case with Yucatán. The Yucatecan *pronunciados* did not even *attempt* to hide their agenda at overthrowing the internal government in their *pronunciamientos*. From 1829, every single *pronunciamiento* text clearly stated that a Liga or federalist administration would replace a Camarilla or centralist one, and vice versa. This was even apparent in the *pronunciamientos de adhesión* of 1832 and 1834, where local demands were tacked on to the seconding of national *pronunciamientos*. National reactive plans were *always* converted into local proactive plans. These *pronunciamiento* texts thus resulted in being a jarring combination of both national and local demands, or in Fowler’s words, combined “private and public concerns, micro and macro demands, concrete and general grievances.”¹³⁹ Moreover, outright hatred and denouncement of the opposing political faction was dominant in the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* text. These revelations challenge Báquer’s statement that the *pronunciamiento* “No busca vencer, sino convencer.”¹⁴⁰ There was no negotiation or convincing going on here in the local realm, but outright struggles for political control.

Added to this is the glaring fact that all the principal *pronunciamientos* discussed were actually started in Yucatán. Perhaps the only possible exceptions to this statement are the *pronunciamientos* of 1832 and 1834, which were carried out by military man Toro, who was following orders from brother-in-law President Santa Anna to realise these movements. Despite this, as will be discovered, there were *pronunciamientos* similar to Toro’s in 1831 and in 1833 which had been motivated by local factions, but which were unsuccessful due to

¹³⁹ Fowler, “Introduction”, p.xxxv.

¹⁴⁰ Báquer, *El modelo español*, p.30.

lack of military intimidation. Taking this into account, it is thus undeniable that Yucatecan *pronunciamientos* were local exercises addressing local grievances. Why then was regionalist rhetoric included in the *pronunciamiento* text? Challenging the conclusions of the majority of historians, it is argued here that regionalist rhetoric was not, with the exception of the Imán *pronunciamiento*, included in the majority of Yucatecan *pronunciamientos* to give them the greatest chance of increasing their support base. The general view has been that the more the ideals expressed in the *pronunciamiento* were vague, ideological and all encompassing (such as federalism, centralism, reunification, and secession), the more supporters could identify with and thus support the *pronunciamiento*. In Rugeley's words, it had to be "like the porridge of the fairy tale [...] not too big and not too small, not too cold and not too hot, but just right."¹⁴¹ Indeed, it has been claimed that the strength of the *pronunciamiento* lay in its ability to gather support through *pronunciamientos de adhesión*, thus gathering the force needed to powerfully negotiate at a national level, and consequently giving it that air of legitimacy as it claimed to represent the will of the people.¹⁴² In the words of Erika Pani, "One could even argue that a *pronunciamiento*'s success depended on its objectives being as broad as possible and its language conciliatory enough for it to attract as many of the disaffected as possible."¹⁴³

Nevertheless, this was not the case for most of the *pronunciamientos* in Yucatán. It had always been clear since independence who would support which *pronunciamiento* here: in the early 1820s, the Meridians would support their regional movements, while the Campecheans would support their own territorial leaders. By the late 1820s, it became apparent that the Camarilla faction would be in major part supported by its followers, with the Liga political faction amassing its own support in their *pronunciamientos*. By the early

¹⁴¹ Rugeley, "The Compass Points of Unrest" (in press).

¹⁴² Vázquez, "El modelo", p.35.

¹⁴³ Erika Pani, "Intervention and Empire: Politics as Usual?" in Fowler (ed.), *Malcontents, rebels and pronunciados: The Politics of Insurrection in Nineteenth-Century Mexico* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, in press).

1830s another dynamic became apparent: any *pronunciamiento* by the commander general and his active forces, combined with the power of the permanent army, could easily overpower the government and its meagre military support base (the civic militias), in spite of the level of political support for the administration. This led to the same commander general in 1832 and 1834 successfully pronouncing for federalism and then centralism respectively. Additionally, one must take into account the small towns which seconded these *pronunciamientos* without fail, be them federalist, secessionist or centralist. The *ayuntamientos* of these towns had to simply follow the general *pronunciamiento* sway at the time; without money, only equipped with the poor and untrained civic militias, it was futile for them to try and resist the more powerful elite political and military bodies in the peninsula. They were essentially passive *pronunciamiento* supporters in most cases; as Vázquez has pointed out, “allegiance [to the *pronunciamiento*] was often a product of the fear awakened by military presence.”¹⁴⁴ Moreover, one must bear in mind the characteristic of the majority of the population in Yucatán: the Maya. With the exception of the few educated Maya leaders, the Maya had no idea what federalism or centralism, or even Mexico, was. They did not participate in *pronunciamientos* because of the ideals stated, but were recruited into *pronunciamientos* through other means (discussed below).

Nonetheless, all *pronunciados* did not hesitate to claim that they were pronouncing according to the “will of the people.” Two hyperactive elite factions were clearly not representing a general feeling; but it was imperative that they state that they were serving the needs of the *pueblo*, in order to preserve the ideological legitimacy of their *pronunciamiento*. Indeed, as Guardino as highlighted, there was the need to include the rhetoric that a particular faction was addressing the needs of the general population. According to him, “dominant

¹⁴⁴Vázquez, “Political Plans”, p.22.

classes, no matter how firmly entrenched in power”,¹⁴⁵ usually need to present their actions (and he quotes Eugene Genovese here) as “the embodiment of a moral code much of which represents the interests and sentiments of all classes.”¹⁴⁶

If national rhetoric and ideals were not used to garner support for *pronunciamientos*, what were the specific strategies used in order to increase the core constituents behind the Yucatecan *pronunciamientos*? The glaring answer is the cooption of the military; every single successful and significant *pronunciamiento* which occurred during this period only succeeded because of the adherence of the military, or by the threat of military force. This is true in an obvious and non-arguable way. The *pronunciamientos* of 1821 and 1823 had the support of the civic militias and active battalions, with the former *pronunciamiento* also being backed by the national garrison; that of 1824 was supported by the same regular army in Campeche and by the Second Active Battalion which was also stationed there. The 1829 *pronunciamiento* was notoriously military, with the leaders of the First and Second Active Battalions along with the permanent army realising the entire *pronunciamiento* (and subsequently taking control of government). The *pronunciamientos* of 1832 and 1834 were instigated by Commander General Toro, his followers in the active battalions, along with the regular troops; finally, the Imán *pronunciamiento* of 1840 was initiated by the Third Active Battalion stationed throughout the eastern towns of the region.

The military presence in Yucatán deserves explanation. After Yucatán became united with Mexico in 1821, the peninsula became heavily militarized. The well trained and armed active battalions (or the reserve army) were established in 1821 and 1824, under the orders of the commander general; it should be noted the commander general himself was appointed by and was loyal to the national government. Meanwhile, the Permanent Army was stationed in Campeche, where the most fortified garrison had been established since the 1600s to protect

¹⁴⁵ Guardino, *Peasants, Politics*, p.9.

¹⁴⁶ Eugene Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York: Vintage Books, 1976), p.608, quoted in Guardino, *Peasants, Politics*, p.9.

Campechean ships coming into port from pirates, and to defend the Spanish colonies against other European powers in the Seven Years' War.¹⁴⁷ They answered directly to the Mexican national executive branch. Finally, the civic militias were established in 1821, to serve the town councils from 1820-1827, and then the state governments from 1827-1835.

With the civic militias being by far the weakest body in Yucatán, *pronunciamiento* success usually depended on which movement the active battalions and the national garrison gave their support to. Whether it was the resolution of internal political factionalism (all *pronunciamientos* in this period), or the solving of relations with Mexico (all *pronunciamientos* once more), the military always had an excuse to get involved in politics through *pronunciamientos*. The *pronunciamiento* which had the better military backing was thus destined to succeed in Yucatán; this was the case for all the region's victorious *pronunciamientos*, as cities and towns had to accept the *pronunciamiento* out of fear of occupation, plunder, eviction, and sometimes even violence. Indeed, the *camarilleros* were forced to issue the *pronunciamiento* of 1821 because of the mutinous national garrison in Campeche; that of 1823 was carried out by the civic and active militias themselves. The *pronunciamiento* of 1824 resulted in potential civil war between the active battalions and the national garrison, with that of 1834 actually provoking war among the civic militias, active battalions, and the regular army. The military *pronunciados* of 1832 (the commander general and the active battalions) easily ousted the powerless civilian authorities. In a different vein, but equally important to the military dimension, the Imán revolt of 1836-1840 was sparked among the Third Active Battalion in the eastern town of Tizimín, who were being forcefully recruited to go to Texas to battle against the insurgency there. In a remarkably similar situation to Rafael de Riego, the military did not want to leave their homeland. Consequently

¹⁴⁷ Jean Bassford von Winning, "Forgotten Bastions along the Spanish Main: Campeche", *The Americas*, Vol.6, No.4 (Apr., 1950), p.423; Lyle N. McAlister, "The Reorganization of the Army of New Spain, 1763-1766", *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol.33, No.1 (Feb., 1953), p.24.

they pronounced continually, until with the help of the Maya, they finally succeeded in February 1840.

One should be wary of perceiving that the army's heavy participation in the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* made it a militaristic practice. Distinctions need to be made concerning the type of military officers who participated in these *pronunciamientos*. The active battalions were one of the primary military and *pronunciamiento* actors during this period. The members of these battalions, despite constituting the reserve army, were not solely official army officers. Instead, the active battalions were, in the words of Juan Ortiz Escamilla, “un tipo de fuerza armada, disciplinada e intermedia entre la vida militar y la doméstica.”¹⁴⁸ The men who belonged to the active battalions were granted military ranks; but their main occupations were their “actividades económicas”.¹⁴⁹ These battalions had thus been created as a reserve force in case of emergency, and were not meant to be a strain on the national treasury, as their members primarily supported themselves through their other activities, being merchants, *hacendados* and politicians. Thus, in the words of Howard Cline, “On Yucatán, properly speaking, there were no militarists.”¹⁵⁰ The active battalions were also a political force; in them were sheltered all the officials for which “no tuvieron cabida en la permanente, es decir, a los expulsados del ejército, los considerados con menos preparación, los que no tenían prestigio y por lo tanto no contaban con una fuerza a su mando.”¹⁵¹ It is only natural that these battalions would consequently feel resentful towards the governing administrations who had placed them there, and this would provoke problems for authorities,

¹⁴⁸ Juan Ortiz Escamilla, “La nacionalización de las fuerzas armadas en México, 1750-1867”, in Manuel Chust and Juan Marchena (eds.), *Las armas de la nación. Independencia y ciudadanía en Hispanoamérica (1750-1850)* (España: Iberoamericana-Vervuert, 2007), p.300.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Cline, “Regionalism and Society in Yucatán”, p.132.

¹⁵¹ Ortiz Escamilla, “La nacionalización de las fuerzas armadas”, p.300.

as they (the battalions) almost always presented a considerable opposition through the *pronunciamiento*.¹⁵²

Key civilian sectors such as the political and business elite (who were not members of the active battalions) also participated in and supported the majority of these *pronunciamientos*. In Yucatán, as early as 1821, civilian actors took an active part in the most influential *pronunciamientos* in Mexico, with the *pronunciamiento* of independence being issued by the governor and the Provincial Deputation together with the military.¹⁵³ The *pronunciamiento* of 1823, although first issued by the military, had the heavy support of the liberals and merchants behind it. That of 1824 was an exercise by the political, business and military elite in Campeche; the *pronunciamiento* of 1829 actually began as a cooptive practice of the military by the centralist political faction. Additionally, the *pronunciamientos* of 1832, 1834 and 1835 similarly had the support of either the federalists or centralists. This civilian participation in *pronunciamientos* constantly expanded to the point that it can be argued that by the late 1830s, *pronunciamientos* became a societal instead of a strictly military-political phenomenon, as *ayuntamientos*, elites, merchants, *campesinos*, and even indigenous groups pronounced in the hope that the governing institutions would recognise their demands and address their problems.

In Yucatán, the 1836-1840 Imán revolt was the watershed in *pronunciamientos* involving extensive civilian participation. While the *pronunciamientos* prior to this all had significant support from the political elites in Mérida and Campeche, it was from this *pronunciamiento* that larger sectors such as the *hombres de bien* of the east of the region, *campesinos*, and the Maya all participated in the practice. Eastern-based businessmen and landowners (such as the cotton, tobacco, and *aguardiente* *hacendados*) who were

¹⁵² Ibid., pp.300-301.

¹⁵³ Indeed, it was primarily the political elites along with the former members of the liberal *sanjuanista* party who were the first to issue the adhesion to the Plan of Iguala. See Zanolli Fabila, "Liberalismo y Monopolio", p.203 and Joaquín Baranda, *Recordaciones históricas*, (Place unpubl.,1907), pp.111-112.

discontented with decrees emanating from the centralist government were coopted by Imán in order to grant prestige and financial resources to his movement. Imán also recruited the Maya and the *campesinos* in order to gain the manpower which was severely lacking in his *pronunciamiento*. This would result in a range of societal demands being included in his *pronunciamiento* text, which was radically different from all the *pronunciamientos* before (which had simply concentrated on elite politics).

One sector of civilian participation deserves special attention in the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento*, which is that of the Maya. As noted, the Imán *pronunciamiento* was the very first *pronunciamiento* to recruit the Maya in its realisation. Through cooption (promises of not having to pay the dreaded Mayan religious *obvención* tax of 12 ½ *reales* for men and 9 for women), Imán managed to persuade thousands of Maya to support his cause, leading to the *pronunciamiento*'s success in mere months, after it had been failing for years. The incorporation of the indigenous peoples to realise *pronunciamientos* in such a formal manner, to the extent of including their demands in a *pronunciamiento* text, was something for which Yucatecans were unprepared; the Maya had not even be allowed to enlist in the civic militias for fear of them possessing arms. To have an elite merchant and a soldier of the active battalion arm the Maya and consciously encourage them to revolt, thus educating them in *pronunciamiento* and insurrection practice, would eventually have its consequences in the Caste War of 1847, which actually began as a Mayan protest against taxes.

From this analysis of civilian participation, it becomes apparent that with the exception of the Imán revolt, the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* (and the perhaps the *pronunciamiento* in general) was thus not the tool of the general will of the people. It did not express the views of the majority, but on the contrary, was the instrument used by the militarily, economically, and politically powerful elite of Mérida and Campeche. It was their ability to mobilize larger sectors of society through the measures discussed above that made it

appear as if the *pronunciamiento* was the will of the people. Barbara Tenenbaum therefore has good reason to warn us against viewing the *pronunciamientos* “as some subtle form of representative democracy in action,” as she stresses that “local elites used them as a vehicle to pour out their political frustrations.”¹⁵⁴

Consequently, just as the inclusion of nationalist rhetoric was to a degree an instrument to make the *pronunciamiento* seem justifiable and “legitimate”, so too was the assertion that these *pronunciamientos* were the genuine representation of the beliefs of the people. In Pani’s words, “As the nation’s sovereignty became a fundamental legitimizing political fiction, setting up a system that would articulate the ‘voice of the people’ was seen as indispensable.”¹⁵⁵ The majority of Yucatecan *pronunciamientos* were manifestations of an evidently elitist power struggle between two hyperactive minorities for possession of the state’s administration, which included the larger and lower sectors into its elitist politics through cooption, coercion, and intimidation. These *pronunciamientos* were a false type of democracy, as there was no genuine consultation of the larger population.¹⁵⁶ Indeed, the Mexican politicians would disregard the popular demands of the Imán *pronunciamiento*, and in 1847, when the Maya attempted to use the *derecho de insurrección* to protest for lower and less taxes, they were executed. The lower classes were not permitted to use this tool; it was designed by the elite as a tool for political and economic change and representation.

On an even more intimate level, the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* could potentially not only be the tool of the elite, but of a particular individual to gain social, military, and political status and recognition.¹⁵⁷ Riego and Iturbide had demonstrated from the very beginning that the *pronunciamiento* was the quickest (and for most the only) way to go about achieving

¹⁵⁴ Barbara A. Tenenbaum, “They Went Thataway’: The Evolution of the *Pronunciamiento*, 1821-1856,” Rodríguez O. (ed.), *Patterns of Contention*, p.199.

¹⁵⁵ Pani, “Intervention and Empire: Politics as Usual?” (in press).

¹⁵⁶ Guerra, “El pronunciamiento”, p.24. This is ironic as one of the reasons people turned to the *pronunciamiento* was because of the lack of belief in the freeness and fairness of elections (as the liberal *sanjuanistas* in 1821 resolved to pronounce against the elite Camarilla faction which had manipulated elections).

¹⁵⁷ Vázquez, “Political Plans”, p.22.

higher rank and/or political status. Constitutional procedures were lengthy, exclusive, and difficult. The *pronunciamiento* was quick, glorifying, and adrenaline packed, with the champion *pronunciado* almost guaranteed elevation and glorification. You could not only become a hero, saving your nation from self-proclaimed unwanted decrees and institutions, but you could become leader of that territory, thus serving “los apetitos personales en torno al poder.”¹⁵⁸ In this vein, it is significant to point out that the leader of almost every single successful *pronunciamiento* in Yucatán during this era became the head of the region in one form or another. *Pronunciamiento* leaders José Segundo Carvajal, Juan de Dios Cosgaya and Francisco de Paula Toro became governors in 1829, 1832, and 1834. Additionally, the 1836-1840 Imán revolt was supposed to enable Imán to possess the rank of *Comandante General del Ejército Libertador*, with temporary rule over the constitution and laws of the independent nation (this did not happen for reasons discussed in Chapter Seven).¹⁵⁹

All these *pronunciamientos* exemplify and embody a microcosm of the constitutional crisis and lack of legitimacy of ruling authorities which was generally present during the nineteenth century in Mexico. The Yucatecan *pronunciamientos* demonstrate that the crisis of authority did not have to be on a national scale, but could occur on a regional level as well, as *pronunciados* could also question and overpower regional authorities.¹⁶⁰ Vázquez highlights that following the violation of the constitutional presidency of Manuel Gómez Pedraza in 1828 and the extra-constitutional imposition of Vicente Guerrero as president, Mexicans realised that through a *pronunciamiento*, a president (and a governor in the Yucatecan case) could be replaced if certain sectors were not happy with the existing ruling authority.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁸ Ernesto de la Torre Villar, “Introducción general” in Jiménez Codinach (ed.). *Planes*, p.22.

¹⁵⁹ Serapio Baqueiro, *Ensayo histórico sobre las revoluciones de Yucatán desde el año de 1840 hasta 1864* Vol.1 (Ed. Salvador Rodríguez Losa: Ediciones de la Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán: Mérida, 1990), p.490.

¹⁶⁰ As Juan Ortiz Escamilla has demonstrated, this was the case in Veracruz, where political factions and regional caudillos pronounced against weak state governments several times throughout the early nineteenth century, and decrees issued by the executive and Congress were disobeyed by the rest of the state authorities. See Ortiz Escamilla, “Veracruz: The Determining Region” (in press).

¹⁶¹ Josefina Zoraida Vázquez, “Two Reactions to the Illegitimate Succession of 1828: Campeche and Jalapa”, in Fowler (ed.), *Forceful Negotiations*, p.52.

Anyone could now claim to represent the people, overthrow the present administration and set up a government with those chosen by the *pronunciados* to be in power. The legitimacy and authority of constitutional bodies consequently became inferior to the voice and representation of the *pronunciados*. It is no coincidence that only after Gómez Pedraza's overthrow that the *pronunciamiento* began to be used in this manner in Yucatán. An excerpt from the 1832 newspaper *El Regulador Yucateco* and how people then interpreted the *pronunciamiento* deserves to be quoted in this context:

Pronunciamiento: [...] en el estado de libertad natural en que nos hallamos, a pesar de pactos y convenciones constitucionales, que decimos *adorar, respetar, defender, y sostener, con la última gota de una sangre* que nadie quiere derramar, cada uno se cree con derecho para formar su plan, que (como diré en su lugar) viene a ser una especie de ley fundamental que todo buen patriota puede dar a la nación, convidándolo primero y forzándole después a entrar en él *por su libre voluntad*, y si ésta falta, por su *aquiescencia*; todo supuesto el libre, espontáneo y franco apoyo de las armas, que tienen el derecho de iniciativa y el de interpretación, comentario y aclaración del plan ó pronunciamiento.¹⁶²

The *pronunciamiento* thus became an instinctive response in a context where a certain sector or sectors were dissatisfied with the ruling authority. Constitutional power structures consequently never had the chance to be in place long enough to be respected, strong, effective, representative or legitimate, and *pronunciados* would constantly contest them through the *pronunciamiento*. Moreover, if you came in to power through a *pronunciamiento*, there was nothing wrong (in the *pronunciados*' eyes) with *pronunciados* forcing you to leave through a *pronunciamiento* (this was especially manifest in the early 1830s). While those in authority denounced contesting *pronunciados* as agents of instability, when these same figures were eventual *pronunciados* themselves, all of a sudden they claimed their own *pronunciamiento* to be a necessary evil in order to overpower the unwanted ruling opposition.

Yucatecan *pronunciamientos* were not only representative of constitutional crisis and the constant search for political change. They were equally important as expressions of identities of communities. In this case, they were literally written expressions of the factional

¹⁶²*El Regulador Yucateco*, 16 June 1832.

identities and ideologies existent in the peninsula, be them *meridanos*, *campechanos*, *sanjuanistas*, *camarilleros*, *ligados*, centralists, separatists, or federalists. Regardless of the impact which the *pronunciamiento* had on the political scene, it served the purpose of voicing those distinct opinions, beliefs, ideas, and desires of a community, thus serving to announce that sector's distinctive identity. The *pronunciamiento* made Yucatecan regional and political identities extremely visible and tangible, especially when notions and ideas of solidarity and communal identity were projected against the rival faction. Thus, while the *pronunciamiento* stressed the importance of individual representation (and in this sense, it was seen as liberal), it still ironically fostered the communal and corporate colonial traditions to a certain extent.¹⁶³ In this aspect, the *pronunciamiento* was undeniably a significant practice in the context of this all-important era in terms of the construction of identities. It marked who represented what and why, and in this light, it was at once unique and constructive.

The Yucatecan *pronunciamientos* were thus quite distinctive from the general model of the *pronunciamiento*, in terms of actors, origins, process, and even outcomes. They were not motivated by popular will but by elite opportunism in the majority of cases, and their texts contained not only national political ideals, but also much more local and personal ambitions. Additionally, in most cases their success did not depend on popular support and *pronunciamientos de adhesión*, but on military strength. The elite factional struggle provoked by and manifested in the *pronunciamiento* plagued the Yucatecan peninsula for twenty years, and ultimately engendered a Mayan rebellion which would bring decades of disaster to Yucatán. This is not to say that *pronunciamientos* were responsible for bringing anarchy to Yucatán during the period discussed here. They disrupted the constitutional order, but they always put new authorities or systems in place; the region was never left to suffer in disorder after a *pronunciamiento*. They were highly powered by ideological forces and factions,

¹⁶³ See Guerra, "El pronunciamiento", p.18; Fowler, "I Pronounce Thus I Exist", p.252.

groups which had ideas on which path would not only guarantee their interests, but which would benefit the prosperity and development of their region, along with positive relations with Mexico. In this sense, they were the markers of a peripheral and poor territory whose inhabitants were determined to have their voices heard, the intrinsic right of any man.¹⁶⁴ Furthermore, the majority of these *pronunciamientos* were the *yucatecos*' attempts to either second national movements, or to join Mexico through negotiation, rather than to secede. On a national level, they were consequently (for the most part) exercises in construction and integration, rather than deconstruction and disintegration. These aspects can possibly be applied to other regional *pronunciamientos* if they were to go under intense study.

Pronunciamientos were therefore evidently not practices of pure instability and chaos.¹⁶⁵ It is only when one realises that this view of the *pronunciamiento* needs to be adopted, that one can truly view the *pronunciamiento* for what it was: a unique, complex and fluid phenomenon arising from a very specific context, with differing origins, dynamics, processes and outcomes, always claiming to have the healthiest intentions, and always with intended and unintended positive and negative outcomes. It is an urgent task to discover the genuineness of the most significant political practice and experience of the time, which was not an isolated phenomenon, but was an experience that was inevitably and inextricably linked to national *and* local socio-political and economic circumstances and practices, and was essentially, an intrinsic part of Mexican political culture. We need to understand this if we are to understand nineteenth-century Mexico, with its grievances, its politics, its mentality, and ultimately, its culture, during this “era of *pronunciamientos*.”¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁴ In the words Villar, “los derechos primordiales que todo hombre tiene de razonar y de expresar libremente su pensamiento por la palabra hablada o escrita,” in Ernesto de la Torre Villar, “Introducción general” in Jiménez Codinach (ed.), *Planes*, p.17.

¹⁶⁵ For a detailed argument on this subject, see Fowler, “Civil Conflict in Independent Mexico”.

¹⁶⁶ Payne, *Politics and the Military*, pp.14-30.

Independence and establishing the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* trend:

The *Pronunciamiento* of 1821

Al pueblo que quiere ser libre
no le faltan recursos para serlo.¹⁶⁷

The date was 15 September 1821; the news was not unexpected. A letter from the governor of Tabasco, Ángel de Toro, addressed to Yucatán's governor and captain general Juan María Echéverri, informed him that Tabasco had been occupied by pro-independence troops commanded by Juan Fernández, and the people of Tabasco had immediately adhered to the independent cause.¹⁶⁸ New Spain had been swept up in independence movements since the proclamation of the Plan of Iguala by Agustín de Iturbide in February 1821, and it was inevitable that the wave would ultimately wash over the remote provinces of the southeast. The *jefe político* of Campeche, Miguel Duque de Estrada, had already written to Echéverri four days earlier, asking him to declare independence, and strongly suggested once more that the captain general swear it. *Teniente de rey* Hilario Artacho also advised the governor that the pro-independence revolts by the national garrison in Campeche were spiralling out of control. Additionally, the radical liberal *sanjuanistas* in Mérida were also calling for immediate adhesion to the Plan. Even the businessmen of the *Camarilla* political faction – the opposing party to the *sanjuanistas* – who constituted significant members of the Provincial Deputation had also shown dissatisfaction at the recent decrees of the *Cortes* against liberal Yucatecan trade. Echéverri had to make a decision quickly; the combination of pressure from all sides meant that independence was inevitable.

¹⁶⁷ 'Los Yucatecos', *Compendio de la historia de Yucatán* (México: Oficina de Don Mariano Ontiveros, 1825), Colección Lafragua 892 p.4.

¹⁶⁸ José Manuel Alcocer Bernés, "Campeche en la consumación de la independencia" in *La consumación de independencia: Tomo 1* (Archivo General de la Nación: México, 1999) p.76.

A junta made up of the Provincial Deputation, the *ayuntamiento* of Mérida, and various ecclesiastical and military authorities consequently met on that very day of 15 September, issuing the *pronunciamiento de adhesión* to the Plan of Iguala and independence. The *pronunciamiento* signified a watershed for the peninsula not only in terms of independence; it highlighted several differing factions coming together to second a common cause. Despite the national orientation of the exercise, it should be noted that each body seconding the Plan of Iguala had its own local interests in mind when supporting the act; be it the hope of gaining political representation and changing the political system, the preservation of trade and commercial interests, the maintenance of clerical privileges, or the loyalty of the locally stationed national garrison to the pro-independent troops throughout the nation. One consequently and immediately gains the impression that this first *pronunciamiento* in Yucatán, though seconding a national movement – and thus manifesting the already present influence which Mexican politics and *pronunciamientos* were having (and were to have) on the region – was still heavily influenced by local factors, actors and desires. This was to be the pattern of *pronunciamientos* for the rest of the early nineteenth century in Yucatán: while the event of the *pronunciamiento* itself clearly depended on national circumstances, the content and motivations of the *pronunciamiento* were conditioned by local factors. This intricate linking of powerful local motivations and the necessity of national *pronunciamiento* strength is the element which would dominate Yucatecan *pronunciamientos* from 1821 onwards.

Just how significant were the local currents for independence in the context of producing this *pronunciamiento de adhesión* in 1821? The distinctiveness of the origins of independence in Yucatán (as compared to those in New Spain) highlighted the locality of the desires for independence. The War of Independence of New Spain had not affected remote Yucatán, and the seeds for independence would be sown in a much different manner here.

Indeed, the idea of independence and its achievement through a *pronunciamiento* first arose among the liberal Yucatecan group known as the *sanjuanistas*. Formed in 1810 by *padre* Vicente María Velásquez, the *sanjuanistas* espoused the liberal ideology of philosophers such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau, René Descartes, Voltaire (François-Marie Arouet), Charles-Louis de Secondat, baron de La Brède et de Montesquieu and Benjamin Constant, highlighting the necessity of individual and equal rights for all. They were especially concerned with the Maya, campaigning for the abolition of the compulsory religious indigenous *obvención* tax, and the end of Mayan servility.¹⁶⁹ They had thus vigorously supported the liberal Constitution of Cádiz in 1812 in the peninsula, which had decreed that all Maya were to be considered as *vecinos*, and thus exempt from all special taxes and servility.¹⁷⁰ The most prominent members of the *sanjuanistas* by 1812 were liberal clergy and middle class *criollo* businessmen, lawyers, priests, and teachers, men such as José Matías Quintana, Pablo Moreno, Manuel Jiménez Solís, Francisco Carvajal, Lorenzo de Zavala, Pantaleón Cantón and José Mariano de Cicero. The Campechean liberals Francisco Antonio Tarrazo and Joaquín García Rejón were also united to the *sanjuanistas*.¹⁷¹

The *sanjuanistas* had nevertheless faced more than significant opposition since their formation in 1810. In reaction to the liberal ideology permeating throughout the cities of Mérida and Campeche, another political faction formed. Those opposed to the *sanjuanistas* and everything they represented were called *rutineros*, so-called because they were “amantes

¹⁶⁹ Justo Sierra O’ Reilly, *Los indios de Yucatán: Consideraciones sobre el origen, causas y tendencias de la sublevación indígena, sus probables resultados y su posible remedio* (México: Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán, 1994 (first publ. 1857)), p.40; Luis Fernando Sotelo Regil, *Campeche en la historia: El estado, el imperio, y la restauración* (México: M.León Sanchez, 1964), p.184; Melchor Campos García, *Sociabilidades políticas en Yucatán: un estudio sobre los espacios políticos: 1780-1834* (Mérida, Yucatán.: UADY: CONACYT, 2003), p.28.

¹⁷⁰ On 9 November 1812, the *Cortes* issued the following decree: “Article 1º. Quedan abolidas las mitas, o mandamientos o repartimientos de indios, y todo servicio personal que bajo de aquellos, u otros nombres presten a los particulares [...] 3º. Quedan también eximidos los indios de todo servicio personal a cualesquiera corporaciones, o funcionarios públicas, o curas párrocos, a quien satisfarán los derechos parroquiales como las demás clases.” See Sotelo Regil, *Campeche en la historia*, pp.186-188.

¹⁷¹ Manuel A Lanz, *Compendio de historia de Campeche* (Campeche: Tip “El Fenix” de Pablo Llovera Marcín, 3ª de “Comercio” No.35, 1905), pp.152-153.

de la rutina.” The *rutineros* were made up in their majority of members from the upper crust of society: landowning and clerical elite, ex-*encomenderos*, the military, the old aristocracy and high royal officials.¹⁷² They were the defenders of the Church, of the obvention, and of Maya labour, elements which were necessary to maintain their social and economic status.¹⁷³ They dominated the Provincial Deputation in 1812, placed there by special selection methods from above,¹⁷⁴ with *rutinero* figures such as Juan José Duarte, José María Ruz, Diego O’Horán, Manuel Pacheco and Francisco de Paula Villegas all constituting the Deputation. While the Constitution of Cádiz had enabled them to be in these positions through its very creation of the Deputation, they did not appreciate the liberal reforms which the same constitution had decreed with reference to the Maya.¹⁷⁵ The hate between the liberal *sanjuanistas* and the traditional *rutineros* consequently ran deep when it came to these clashing ideologies.¹⁷⁶ When the Constitution was abolished in 1814 with the return of Ferdinand VII, the *rutineros* wasted no time in ridiculing and persecuting the *sanjuanistas*,

¹⁷² Zanolli Fabila, “La alborada del liberalismo yucateco. El I Ayuntamiento Constitucional de Mérida, 1812-1814” (Unpubl. Masters Diss., México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1993), p.62.

¹⁷³ Tomás Aznar Barbachano and Juan Carbó, *Memoria sobre la conveniencia, utilidad y necesidad de erigir constitucionalmente en estado de la confederación mexicana el antiguo distrito de Campeche, constituido de hecho en estado libre y soberano desde mayo de 1848, por virtud de los convenios de división territorial que celebró con el estado de Yucatán, de que era parte. Presentada al soberano congreso de la unión y dirigida a las honorables legislaturas de los estados en agosto de 1861* (México: Imprenta de Ignacio Cumplido, 1861), p.15.

¹⁷⁴ The Provincial Deputations were the ruling administrative authorities of Mexico, created by the Constitution of 1812. Led by the figure of *jefe superior político*, they were primarily executors of the central policies dictated by the *Cortes*. The constitution had divided Mexico into six independent Deputations, with Yucatán being one of them. For a detailed examination on this topic, see: Nettie Lee Benson, *The Provincial Deputation in Mexico: Harbinger of Provincial Autonomy, Independence, and Federalism* (Texas: University of Texas Press, 1992); Benson, *La diputación provincial y el federalismo Mexicano* (México: El Colegio de México, 1994) and Melchor Campos García and Roger Domínguez Saldivar, *La Diputación provincial en Yucatán, 1812-1823: entre la iniciativa individual y la acción del gobierno* (Mérida, Yucatán: UADY, 2007).

¹⁷⁵ Zanolli Fabila, “Liberalismo y Monopolio”, p.95; Zanolli Fabila, “La alborada del liberalismo yucateco”, p.66.

¹⁷⁶ The opposition between the two parties was so fierce in 1814 that then-*jefe superior político* of Yucatán Manuel Artazo y Toredemer, had to formally decree that anyone who used the phrase orally or in the press “vivan los rutineros, mueran los liberales” or viceversa, or anyone who even used the terminology of “rutineros”, “liberales” or “sanjuanistas” would be punished, *El Jefe Superior Político de Yucatán, Manuel Artazo y Toredemer manifiesta que será castigado conforme a la Ley, la persona que exclame las frases “vivan los rutineros, mueran los liberales” o la inversa, así como la que emplee los calificativos de “rutineros”, “liberales” o “sanjuanistas”, porque alteran la paz publica.*, CAIHY, Impresos, I-1549.032, Mérida, Yucatán, 27 July 1814.

even sending Zavala, Quintana and Bates to the prison of San Juan de Ulúa in Veracruz for three years.¹⁷⁷

In 1817, Zavala and his fellow *sanjuanistas* returned to Yucatán, ever more eager to reimplement the Constitution. The faction expanded its base through the liberal Masonic lodge La Aurora, which included not only *sanjuanistas*, but surprisingly, *rutineros* as well. Indeed, news had arrived that year of the revolts of the Spanish liberals against absolutism, which included Mina in Pamplona, Porlier in La Coruña, Lacy in Cataluña and Vidal in Valencia; *yucatecos* began to realise that there was the possibility that the King would have to re-establish the constitution. *Rutineros* thus joined the lodge, ensuring that they would be on the victorious side if the King decided to bow to the wishes of the rebels. Additionally, by joining forces with the *sanjuanistas*, they intended to capture the sympathies of the liberals, hoping to prevent the *sanjuanistas* from attacking their interests (the tribute, the obvention, and Mayan servility) if the King agreed to re-establish the Constitution. Clerical elite such as Francisco Paula Villegas, powerful merchants like Pedro José Guzmán, and military men like Benito Aznar, José Segundo Carvajal and most importantly, former *rutinero* Mariano Carrillo y Albornoz (commander of the *ingenieros* of the permanent army) consequently all joined the lodge.¹⁷⁸

The triumph of the *pronunciamiento* of Rafael de Riego (which began on 1 January 1820 and succeeded in March) led to the King's restoration of the Constitution. Captain General of Yucatán Miguel Castro y Aroz hesitated on its reimplementation, after powerful arguments by *rutineros* headed by *teniente de rey* Juan José León convinced him not to do so. Nevertheless, on 9 March, leaders of the Aurora (Zavala and Carrillo) along with military men Benito Aznar and Joaquín Rivas Vertiz convinced the captain general to reestablish the

¹⁷⁷ Sotelo Regil, *Campeche en la historia*, p.201.

¹⁷⁸ Sierra O' Reilly, *Los indios de Yucatán*, pp.169-171; 185; Campos García, *Sociabilidades políticas*, pp.56-58.

Constitution on 12 May 1820.¹⁷⁹ Untrusting of the *rutineros*' influence on Araoz, a private faction made up of Aznar, Carrillo, Rivas Vertiz, and Villegas forced the captain general to resign on 8 June.¹⁸⁰ The law stated that with the resignation of the captain general, political command automatically went to *teniente de rey* Juan José de León, who was a leading *rutinero* (stationed in Campeche), and thus was an enemy of the masons.¹⁸¹ Carrillo consequently ordered his dismissal, and promoted himself to captain general of Yucatán.¹⁸² He then named Hilario Artacho, commander of the artillery, as *teniente de rey*.¹⁸³ The *jefatura política* was handed over to Basilio María de Argaiz, and the intendancy to Pedro Bolio.¹⁸⁴

Further actions by Carrillo would soon however provoke the fragmentation of the liberal coalition and herein would lay the first stirrings of a Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* for independence. Just three days after the *criollos* had assumed their posts, a group headed by Carrillo (whose supporters were former *rutinero* and priest Francisco Paula Villegas, Joaquín Rivas Vertiz, Pedro Almeida, businessmen Pedro José Guzmán and Sergeant Major Benito Aznar)¹⁸⁵ demanded the dismissal of Argaiz from his post of *jefe político* of Mérida on 21 June. While heavy protests came from Zavala and Quintana – who had close links with Argaiz¹⁸⁶ – they were powerless to stop it. The Carrillo coalition ironically nominated former *rutinero* Rivas Vertiz in Argaiz's place, ensuring that the three branches of power were now in the hands of this newly formed, powerful, and potentially authoritarian faction. Former

¹⁷⁹ Campos García, *Sociabilidades políticas*, p.60.

¹⁸⁰ Melchor Campos García "Faccionalismo y votaciones en Yucatán, 1824-1832" in *Historia Mexicana* (July-September 2001), p.65; El Yucateco, *Se expone la conducta arbitraria de Mariano Carrillo y Alborno. Y se aclara que Yucatán no hará su Independencia*, Supplement to No.331 of the *Miscelánea de Madrid* (Mérida, Yucatán: Imprenta Patriótica Liberal a cargo de D.D. Cantón. 1821), CAIHY, Impresos, I.1549.047.

¹⁸¹ The post of *teniente de rey*, or second-in-command of the province, had been created in 1744 under Bourbon rule. He was the chief of the garrison in Campeche, and was to assume rule of the province, given the death or absence of the governor. See Francisco Álvarez, *Anales Históricos de Campeche 1812-1910*, Tomo I (Mérida de Yucatán: Imp. del Colegio S. José de Artes y Oficios, 1912), p.11; Sergio Quezada, *Breve historia de Yucatán* (México: Colegio de México, 2001), p.94.

¹⁸² Sotelo Regil, *Campeche en la historia*, pp.208-209.

¹⁸³ Lanz, *Compendio de historia*, p.169.

¹⁸⁴ Campos García, *Sociabilidades políticas*, p.61.

¹⁸⁵ Sierra O' Reilly, *Los indios de Yucatán*, pp.210; 212.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid*, p.213.

sanjuanistas José Cadenas, Joaquín Castellanos, Francisco Bates, Manuel Milanés, and Pantaleón Cantón now joined this stronger Carrillo-led faction which would soon become known as the Camarilla.¹⁸⁷

The other half of the faction, led by Zavala and Quintana, was disgusted by the dismissal of Argaiz, and by Carrillo's disloyalty to the *sanjuanistas*, as they realised that he had simply used them to promote himself and his followers to positions of power.¹⁸⁸ Additionally, the fact that former *rutineros* Carrillo and Rivas Vertiz were in governing positions meant that the *sanjuanistas* had lost any chance of representation at a political level; indeed, the ruling coalition did not represent any of their principles. The *sanjuanistas* thus reorganised themselves in September 1820, with the new name of the Confederación Patriótica. With Zavala as president, the faction declared that its aims were to educate the citizens on their constitutional rights and to spread the importance of the respect of the constitution (no doubt in the face of the unlawful moves made by Carrillo and his men).¹⁸⁹ Many politicians chose to either stay or unite with Zavala, with Manuel Crescencio Rejón, Lorenzo Peón, Joaquín Casares y Armas, José Encarnación Cámara,¹⁹⁰ Manuel García Sosa, José Tiburcio López, and the brothers Francisco Antonio and Pedro Tarrazo all becoming *confederados*.¹⁹¹

The *confederados* had placed their hopes in the October elections in order to gain political positions. Nevertheless, their expectations were soon quashed, as throughout the voting process, Carrillo ordered the increase of military patrols to intimidate voters. Additionally, *camarillero* Rivas Vertiz also allowed his supporters to vote more than once, simply dressed in different clothing, and then granted himself and his secretary the privilege

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., pp.212-213; *Se expone la conducta arbitraria de Mariano Carrillo [...]*, Mérida, 1821.

¹⁸⁸ Sierra O' Reilly, *Los indios de Yucatán*, pp.211-217.

¹⁸⁹ Campos García, *Sociabilidades políticas*, p.55.

¹⁹⁰ Sierra O' Reilly, *Los indios de Yucatán*, p.190.

¹⁹¹ Melchor Campos García, *Que los yucatecos todos, proclamen su independencia: historia del secesionismo yucateco, 1821-1849* (Mérida, Yucatán, México: Ediciones de la UADY, 2002), p.3.

of tallying the final votes (a deed which should have been done by a neutral parish junta).¹⁹² Needless to say, the *confederados* were infuriated by the blatant disrespect for fair elections, heading a *motín* on 3 October, which led to the temporary imprisonment of Zavala, García Sosa, and others (these two figures had to leave to attend the *Cortes* in Spain the very next day).¹⁹³

For the *confederados*, faith had now been lost in a just government and free and fair elections. Their members had been imprisoned, elections had been rigged, and it had been demonstrated that the *camarilleros* were willing to take any measures needed to maintain their political control over the peninsula; and they could afford to do so, because men such as Carrillo and Aznar were members of the permanent army. Zavala consequently believed that once political power resided with the military, the liberal ideas of and respect for the constitution would never be observed.¹⁹⁴ In his words:

La constitución que había servido de escalón al señor Carrillo para usurpar el mando militar, vino a ser luego el objeto de su mayor desprecio, y se vieron atropellados por este déspota letrados, eclesiásticos, jueces, militares, y en fin toda clase de ciudadanos, como fuesen libres y tuviesen valor para manifestar la verdad [...] ¿Y es ésta, decían los meridianos, la libertad que hemos jurado defender? ¿Ésta la felicidad que nos ofrecía el señor Carrillo cuando aspiraba al mando? ¡¡¡Provincia desgraciada, tu destino es ser siempre esclava y víctima de la tiranía!!!¹⁹⁵

There only seemed to be one solution left for *confederado* Quintana: independence, meaning a complete break from the current system and authorities, and a fresh start. With his own son participating in the insurgency in far-off Mexico, Quintana had been partial to the idea of independence for several years, but the majority of *sanjuanistas* had not welcomed his ideas, having placed their faith in the restoration of the constitution.¹⁹⁶ Now, with those in charge of implementing the constitution having proved themselves unreliable, and with a

¹⁹² Fowler, *Mexico in the Age*, pp.171-173.

¹⁹³ Sierra O' Reilly, *Los indios de Yucatán*, p.233.

¹⁹⁴ Fowler, *Mexico in the Age*, p.172.

¹⁹⁵ Zavala, *Pruebas de la Extensión*, pp.660-664.

¹⁹⁶ *Clamores de la Fidelidad Americana contra la opresión o Fragmentos*, 15 and 22 November 1813, 27 December 1813, 24 and 31 January 1814, 7 February 1814.

much more concrete and immediate reason to break with the current system, the *confederados* began to warm to Quintana's ideas. Zavala became one of the principal advocates of independence; it was reported that in a dinner in September 1820, Zavala "ya caliente con los licores," had an interesting discussion with a fellow *confederado*. According to sources, Zavala declared that "la Confederación producirá mil bienes." "Será," answered his fellow *confederado* "el despojo de los jefes actuales." "Sí," responded Zavala, "pero sobre todo la independencia."¹⁹⁷ The intrinsic right of the people to take whatever means necessary – even if they be unlawful – to depose unwanted authoritarian leaders and re-establish justice in the constitutional system thus became intrinsically linked to independence. Indeed, *camarillero* Raimundo Pérez condemned the *confederados* for trying to "formar el espíritu de los pueblos [...] [para] hacerse dueño de las elecciones, deponer a los ilustrados y virtuosos jefes que gobiernan la provincia, y de este modo, sustraerla del gobierno monárquico de la metrópolis y erigirla en república," adding that the *confederados* were spreading the belief among the "pueblo [...] a no tener distancia entre el que manda y el que obedece, pintar siempre a las autoridades como opresoras de la humanidad o conspirar [par]a hacerlos despreciables."¹⁹⁸ Nevertheless, *confederados* now (ironically) believed that they were allowed to take anti-constitutional measures in order to ensure the eventual respect of constitutional procedures. Quintana thus declared that the conduct of a true *sanjuanista* "se ajustaba a la regla de que la autoridad no debe ser respetada sino en cuanto cumple con el objeto de su institución."¹⁹⁹ On this basis, the *confederado* program was now legitimate, as it was their right to "quitar a las autoridades"²⁰⁰ when their rule exceeded acceptable limits.

Even as the *confederados* began plotting for independence at the end of 1820, events in New Spain would change the entire face of politics of the region forever. While *criollos*

¹⁹⁷ Campos García, *Sociabilidades políticas*, p.117.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., p.68.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., p.69.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

had managed to take over constitutional power in Yucatán, Spanish officials still holding power in New Spain had dragged their feet over the full implementation of the constitution, thus leading to severe disillusionment and a loss of faith among *criollos* in the administrative bodies. Their solution was the same as the resolution of the *confederados*: independence. On 24 February 1821, Agustín de Iturbide headed the *pronunciamiento* of the Plan of Iguala in Guerrero, declaring Mexican independence, the union of Mexicans and Spaniards, and respect for the Roman Catholic Church (the three guarantees). A constitutional monarchy system would rule the nation, and the emperor would be from a Spanish dynasty (the throne was actually offered to Ferdinand VII). The Treaties of Córdoba followed on 24 August 1821, where Spanish Viceroy Juan O' Donojú ratified the Plan, fully establishing Mexican independence.

The Plan of Iguala was the missing element which the *confederados* had needed to proclaim independence. Firstly, it conformed exactly to their ideology which had been formed concerning the right of the people to protest and “pronounce” against authorities which did not represent the needs of the *pueblo*, in order to establish a system which was beneficial to the majority. Additionally, confronted with the powerful civic and military Camarilla faction, it was impossible for *sanjuanistas* to take any real action which targeted only strictly local aims. To adhere to the much larger independence movement which was sweeping through New Spain bolstered their own project's strength. Furthermore, the all-encompassing doctrine and vast appeal of the Plan of Iguala would also give the *sanjuanista* cause a greater sense of political and ideological validity; all they had to do was issue a *pronunciamiento de adhesión* in order to legitimately fit into the wider context of a grand movement which was saving the *patria* from imperial rule. This was to be the basis for successful Yucatecan *pronunciamentos* throughout the early nineteenth century; *yucatecos* essentially needed a national *pronunciamiento* to adhere to, in order to give their own local

cause some sort of national and greater authenticity and strength, and thus allow some chance of the *pronunciamiento*'s success. Yucatecan *pronunciamientos* would also in major part identify with and follow the ideologies permeating throughout Mexico. Finally, it *had* to succeed; the power of the *pronunciamiento* had been demonstrated in Riego's success in intimidating a King to re-establish the constitution, and now a Mexican was daring to do the same, with heavy support; how could he not triumph?

With the news of the Plan of Iguala, the now renamed *liberales sanjuanistas* (as of 1821), including Quintana, Agustín Zavala (his brother Lorenzo was still abroad attending the *Cortes*), José Tiburcio López, and Mateo Morenos all worked vigorously for the cause of the seconding of the *pronunciamiento* in the peninsula. They held juntas in San Juan, advocating independence, and published pro-independent ideas and discussions in their liberal founded newspapers *El Miscelaneo*, *El Redactor Meridano*, and *Los Clamores de la Fidelidad Americana contra la opresión o Fragmentos para la historia futura*. Fervent *sanjuanista* Juan de Dios Cosgaya also had his own newspapers *El Yucateco o Amigo del Pueblo*, *El Democrático Universal* and *El Cometa o Tertulia Mitidáctica*, claiming Iturbide to be the saviour of the *patria*.²⁰¹ The *sanjuanistas* began a campaign to collect signatures for independence in September, and by the 11th of the same month, they had already collected more than two hundred.²⁰² In response, the *camarillero*-dominated Deputation (made up of Pedro Bolio, Pedro Manuel de Regil, Joaquín Torres and Pablo de Lanz) declared that New Spain was in a state of civil war, while reiterating Yucatán's fidelity to the monarchy. Nevertheless, it was impossible to repress the open discussion on and action concerning separation from Spain; in September, the people of Mérida woke up to see a statue of King

²⁰¹ Zanolli Fabila, "Liberalismo y Monopolio", p.197; Baranda, *Recordaciones*, pp.85-113.

²⁰² Campos García, *Sociabilidades políticas*, p.84.

Fernando VII dressed in a cowboy hat, with a rope around his neck, and holding a banana. For the liberals, the monarchy was practically finished.²⁰³

The news of the Plan of Iguala mobilised part of another powerful faction in favour of independence: the *rutineros*. As expected, before the news of the Plan of Iguala filtered down to Yucatán, the *rutineros* had declared themselves sworn enemies of the insurgency, with priests even condemning the rebels in their sermons. Nevertheless, the realisation that the *Cortes* were bent on clerical reform (to abolish the *fueros* and the obvention, secularize the convents, and end Mayan servility) made most of the *rutinero* party quickly change its mind. When the plan of Iguala outlined promises to protect the Catholic religion, to conserve the *fueros* of the clergy and to protect their (the clergy's) properties, with no talk of ending Maya servility, there was hardly any *rutinero* who did not feel compelled to adhere to the Plan. In the words of *rutinero* Ceferino Gutiérrez “la total separación de México a la dominación española, nos será muy útil” as it would free *rutineros* from “la inicua y siempre maldita Constitución española, origen de cuantos males hemos experimentado, ya será causa de que España pierda infaliblemente todas las Américas.”²⁰⁴ They held no loyalty to the *camarilleros* in power, as many had been furious at the dismissal of staunch *rutineros* Captain General Araoz and *teniente de rey* León; the event of masons taking over of administration was not only unlawful, but blasphemous, (indeed, a significant section of the clergy saw masonry as evil). Moreover, they had lost confidence in the king who had bowed to the wishes of the liberals.

Merchants (both *camarilleros* and *sanjuanistas*) also began calling for the seconding of the *pronunciamiento* due to recent harmful trade measures decreed by the *Cortes*. External trade was of vital importance for the economic survival of the peninsula, and Yucatecan businessmen had enjoyed significantly more liberal terms of trade than those in New Spain,

²⁰³ Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, p.193.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., p.115.

especially with regard to more partners and lowered tariffs.²⁰⁵ Powerful Campechean businessmen Pedro Manuel de Regil and Pablo de Lanz, although *camarilleros* and members of the Provincial Deputation, had been protesting against the decree of 9 October 1820 which had declared that from 15 August 1821, the trade of cotton goods between Spanish colonies and all other ports would cease. For Yucatecans, this meant the end of legal commerce of textiles and cloths coming in their majority from Jamaica, affecting Meridian and Campechean merchants.²⁰⁶ Additionally, in mid-1821 the Crown blocked the principal mercantile routes from Yucatán to Veracruz, the first leg of the route for goods exported from Yucatán.²⁰⁷ With no response to the merchants' complaints, it became apparent that the institution was no longer willing to serve the needs of the elite tradesmen, and their inclination towards independence consequently heightened. Just as Jamaica was about to send a substantial shipment of English cloths and threads to be sold in Campeche on 11 September (now an illegal move), on that very same day, the Campechean *ayuntamiento* asked Echéverri to declare independence.

Campeche itself was a hotbed of independence. The Campechean *ayuntamiento* had looked on with increasing disgust at the dictatorial moves of the Meridian-based Camarilla administration, which had not bothered to consult with any other political body (i.e. the *ayuntamiento* of Campeche). This was the beginning of a Campechean resentment against the

²⁰⁵ Highly lacking in natural resources, and with an extensive coastline, trade became the way of Yucatecan survival, with the income gained from the export of its few precious resources (such as salt, henequen, *aguardiente*, wax, dyewood, and cattle products) used to import more essential goods such as flour, textiles, and cotton. Since the mid 1700s Yucatecan merchants had enjoyed extremely liberal terms of trade through its one port of Campeche, including permission to be initiated in the Caribbean zone of free commerce (which included Cuba, Santo Domingo, Puerto Rico, Margarita and Trinidad). In 1778, it was decreed that the ports of the peninsula only had to pay 1 1/2 percent tariff rates on imported Spanish goods, and 4 percent on foreign goods. From 1780, Campeche commenced an extremely profitable trade with Veracruz, sending salt, sugarcane, henequen, rice, fish, wax, and dyewood, importing flour from Veracruz. The Meridian port of Sisal, established in 1811, also began a highly lucrative trade with Havana, Jamaica, and New York, exporting henequen, starch, cotton and livestock. See Moisés González Navarro, *Raza y tierra: La guerra de castas y el henequén* (México: El Colegio de México, 1970), pp.49-50.

²⁰⁶ Campos García, *Que los yucatecos*, p.162.

²⁰⁷ In June 1821 the Provincial Deputation ordered that the Yucatecan deputies attending the *Cortes* demand the continuity of free commerce and the liberal *reglamento de comercio* of 1814, along with insisting that the ports surrounding Veracruz be reopened, but to no avail. See *Ibid.*, p.64.

Meridian administration's enjoyment of political domination which would last for decades to come, and would be responsible for some of the most significant *pronunciamientos* of the century. The head of the *ayuntamiento* of Campeche Miguel Duque de Estrada now demanded independence in early September, declaring to the Deputation that if the Meridians did not support the cause, the Campecheans "atropellarían con todo", declaring themselves independent of Spain on their own.²⁰⁸ He then sent commissioners to Tabasco to let Captain General Ángel de Toro know that Yucatecans sympathised with the cause of independence, and that they only awaited orders to second it. The national garrison in Campeche was also up in arms;²⁰⁹ the news in Campeche of the occupation of Tabasco by four hundred military troops was their catalyst,²¹⁰ as they began revolting in support of the pro-independence army (called the Ejército Trigarante) in Mexico. It should be kept in mind that they had also been highly upset by the dismissal of their *teniente de rey* Juan José de León by Carrillo, and on 15 September, the new *teniente de rey* Hilario Artacho wrote to the governor complaining that he was being obligated to take extreme precautions to try to preserve order.²¹¹

The threat posed by the mutinous garrison was to be the last push needed for the Provincial Deputation to issue the *pronunciamiento de adhesión*. This was yet another *pronunciamiento* trend which was to be demonstrated throughout early nineteenth-century Yucatán; regardless of the civilian desires for a *pronunciamiento* in the region, it would always be the military who would be responsible for the actual issuing of the *pronunciamiento*, be it through the threat of military violence, violence itself, or the military themselves taking matters into their own hands and becoming the first and primary *pronunciados*. This was just the first sign that the *pronunciamiento* would soon become a

²⁰⁸ 'Los Yucatecos', *Compendio de la historia de Yucatán*, 1825, p.4.

²⁰⁹ The garrison was constituted of the permanent battalions of *Castilla*, that of *pardos* or *tiradores*, the *milicias blancas* and the body of artillery. See Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, pp.131-132.

²¹⁰ Raquel Barcelo, "La consumación de la Independencia en Yucatán" in *La consumación de independencia* Tomo II (Archivo General de la Nación: México, 1999) p.379.

²¹¹ Alcocer Bernés, "Campeche en la consumación de la independencia", p.77.

military-dominated practice which was to last throughout the early independent years, as army officers would increasingly become involved in politics through their ability to issue and control *pronunciamientos*.

Interests among all sectors had thus converged for independence, and all for very different reasons. Echéverri, forced by the pressure from all sides, but ultimately fearful of the garrison in Campeche,²¹² ordered a junta on 15 September in which the members of the Provincial Deputation, the *ayuntamiento* of Mérida, *sanjuanistas*, *rutineros*, the military (with only Carrillo refusing to sign the act) and the clergy attended, reflecting the grand spectrum of interests to which the *pronunciamiento* appealed.²¹³ The *pronunciamiento de adhesión*, the first *pronunciamiento* to ever be issued in Yucatán, claiming to be “unida en afectos y sentimientos a todos los que aspiran a la felicidad del suelo Americano” proclaimed to uphold the Plan of Iguala and Independence, which “la reclama la justicia, la requiere la necesidad y la abona el deseo de todos sus habitantes.”²¹⁴ The pointed references to the ideological sympathies which Yucatecans shared with the insurgents of New Spain were already important indicators of the influence which politics and *pronunciamientos* in Mexico were to have on Yucatán in the future.

While the *pronunciamiento* had declared itself united with the movement and affections of New Spain, recognising as “hermanos y amigos a todos los americanos” there was nevertheless no indication in its text concerning actual unification with Mexico. Instead, it simply declared that *sanjuanista* Francisco Tarrazo and *camarillero* Juan Rivas Vertiz were to go to Mexico to communicate the adhesion to the Plan, and to wait on the “definitas

²¹² It should be noted that until independence, the national garrison was the dominant military force in the peninsula; it was only after independence that the powerful Active Battalions were formed. Mérida consequently had no significant military force to counter the potential attack of the garrison in 1821.

²¹³ Among those signing the act were *sanjuanistas* Manuel Jiménez Solís, José Matías Quintana, Lorenzo de Zavala, Fernando Valle, and Juan de Dios Cosgaya, along with the Deputation (to which *camarilleros* Pedro Manuel de Regil, Joaquín Torres, Pablo de Lanz belonged), merchant *camarilleros* Pedro Guzmán, and José Julián Peón, clerical members Francisco Paula Villegas and Manuel Pardío, sargeant major and *camarillero* Benito Aznar, colonel of artillery Rivas Vertiz, and *rutineros* such as Juan Manuel Calderón.

²¹⁴ Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, p.497.

resoluciones” of the powers in Mexico.²¹⁵ The *camarilleros* had adhered to the *pronunciamiento* of an entirely different province (Mexico), without demonstrating any intention of uniting with that province, and this had been intentional. They (the *camarilleros*) had only obtained power less than a year ago, and they had no intention of losing their authority due to alterations of the political system inspired by events from without. As Anna has pointed out, regional elites in the more remote provinces of Yucatán viewed the Plan of Iguala not primarily as unification with Mexico, but more importantly as an opportunity to consolidate and strengthen their own positions.²¹⁶ In his words, “Throughout the country, the provinces rushed to independence because the Plan of Iguala [...] promised protection and development for groups in control of local power.”²¹⁷ John Tutino has also supported this view, as he believes that “Mexican elites saw independence as a means to claim control of the state to serve their class interests”²¹⁸ The *camarillero*-dominated Deputation, contrary to the desires of the *sanjuanistas*, *rutineros* and *campechanos*, had thus manipulated the *pronunciamiento* to ensure that no resetting of the local political system would occur, but instead ensured that they would simply consolidate their power through independence as they freed themselves from Spanish rule. Article Two of this *pronunciamiento de adhesión* thus stated that “sin la menor alteración se observen las leyes existentes, según el orden constitucional, y se respeten las autoridades en todos los ramos de gobierno, actualmente establecido.”²¹⁹ In one blow, the hopes of the *sanjuanistas*, the army, the *rutinero* clergy, and the Campechean politicians for political change were thrown back in their faces. The *camarilleros* had frustrated the entire plan of uniting with Mexico and resetting the political structure; the people, the systems, and the mechanisms were identical to before. All that had

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ Anna, *Forging*, p.70.

²¹⁷ Ibid., p.68.

²¹⁸ John Tutino, *From Insurrection to Revolution in Mexico: Social Bases of Agrarian Violence 1750-1940* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1986), p.215.

²¹⁹ Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, p.497.

changed was that Yucatán was left floundering without any Spanish economic aid (an annual contribution of 150,000 pesos which dated from early Bourbon rule), and with an uncertain future relationship with Mexico.²²⁰

The *camarilleros* also ensured that their merchant interests with Cuba were protected with Article Three of the *pronunciamiento* decreeing that Yucatán “reconoce por hermanos y amigos a todos los americanos y españoles europeos,”²²¹ and Article Five stating “que para precaver los irrisarcibles perjuicios que resultarían de la interrupción del comercio entre aquellos y estos puertos, se acuerde del mismo modo su continuación, bajo las reglas, aranceles y seguridades, actualmente establecidas.”²²² *Camarilleros* had thus successfully consolidated both their political and economic dominance; independence, it seemed, had not been such a bad idea after all. This was only the beginning of the practice of the Yucatecan elite adapting a national *pronunciamiento* to favour their local circumstances; even though the *pronunciamiento* had reflected the desires of the majority for independence, it had been manipulated by the *camarilleros* to suit their own purposes. Throughout early nineteenth-century Yucatán, the political and military elite would continually hijack and convert a national reactive *pronunciamiento* (against ruling authorities) into a local proactive practice to ensure that it benefitted their interests. In this sense, from the very first *pronunciamiento* in Yucatán, there were already inklings that it was to become in part an opportunistic elite exercise. A regional political faction giving local flavour to a national movement (manifested in a *pronunciamiento de adhesión*) would be a pattern of Yucatecan *pronunciamientos* for years to come.

²²⁰ Juan María Echáverri, Pedro Bolio, Pedro Manuel de Regil, José Joaquín de Torres, Juan Evangelista Echánove, Sebastián Hernández, Pablo de Lanz, Joaquín Castellanos, *Proclama de la Excelentísima Diputación Provincial de Yucatán por la Independencia Política Pacífica de esta región*, CAIHY, Impresos, I-1545.043, Mérida, September 25, 1821.

²²¹ Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, p.497.

²²² *Ibid.*, p.498: As highlighted in the previous chapter, it was the Meridian elite merchants who had their commercial ties with the overseas colonies of Cuba and Jamaica. Those of Campeche on the other hand had their principal relations with Mexico (primarily Veracruz, Tampico and Matamoros).

Regardless of the *camarilleros*' outright manhandling of the *pronunciamiento de adhesión*, they were careful to formulate a rhetoric which was to become almost standard text for *pronunciamientos* in the future. To mask their self-serving actions, the *pronunciamiento* text was filled with dramatic talk that it had indeed been a liberal exercise, representing the needs of the people and their rights to make decisions for their own wellbeing. The *camarilleros* thus declared that the preservation of the current political power system was necessary "afianzar más eficazmente los derechos sagrados de la libertad, propiedad y seguridad legítima, elementos que constituyen el orden público y la felicidad social" and for the "bienestar y prosperidad de esta benemérita provincia."²²³ The need to tangibly express that the *pronunciamiento* was serving the needs of the people, while it clearly was against the majority's desires was highly paradoxical. Nevertheless, the *camarilleros* had to include this rhetoric in order to preserve that liberal aspect of legitimacy which validated the existence of the *pronunciamiento* in the first place. This practice of keeping up appearances through pretentious liberal rhetoric (i.e. claiming to represent the needs of "the people" and thus ensuring the general happiness of Yucatecan society) in a *pronunciamiento*, while in fact it was exercised by one elite minority in Yucatán (not just by the *camarilleros*, but other factions as well as shall be discovered) was to be one dominant characteristic of the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento*. Indeed, this was just a glimpse into the *pronunciamiento* future.

Despite the actions of the *camarilleros*, they were fully aware that Yucatán could never survive on its own as a fully independent nation; the region's terrain was lacking in natural resources needed to nurture a prosperous internal industry and market; trade was thus extremely important to its economic survival. However, its exposure to the sea meant that it was a victim to constant looting and pirating unless a richer nation subsidised the protection of its coasts and its trade. In fact, the province was so poor that until recently, instead of

²²³ Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, p.498.

having to pay contributions to Spain (as all the other Spanish colonies did), it instead received 150,000 pesos annually from the Crown.²²⁴ Unification with Mexico was the only answer; but the *camarilleros* were to attempt to negotiate for positive terms in this domain. On 20 September 1821 the Deputation declared to Iturbide's newly installed administration that unification with Mexico would only happen if the liberal mercantile regulations of 1814 of Yucatán were reimplemented,²²⁵ and if Mexico provided the annual subsidy of 150,000 (previously granted by Spain).²²⁶ This use of the *pronunciamiento* to pave the way for negotiation with Mexico in the interest of the preservation of relative Yucatecan economic (and political as shall be seen) sovereignty would become a defining characteristic of the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* throughout the following decades.

The *camarilleros*' political manipulation of the *pronunciamiento de adhesión* would not be accepted quietly. On 13 October, the national garrison (loyal to the executive and the national army) and the clergy of Campeche (eager for the protection offered by the Plan of Iguala), headed by deposed *teniente de rey* Juan José de León, powerful parish priests José Mariano de Cicero and Vicente María Velasquez, assumed the name of the *iturbidistas* and began revolting for the swearing (not just the declaration) of the Plan and unification with Mexico. They then proceeded to order the *ayuntamiento* of Campeche to host the tricolour flag of the Army of the Three Guarantees (on King Ferdinand VII's birthday, of all days), just days after the Deputation had declared that the Spanish flag was to remain flying; it was the

²²⁴ María Cecilia Zuleta, "Raíces y razones del federalismo peninsular: 1821-1825" in Josefina Zoraida Vázquez (coord.), *El establecimiento del federalismo en México: 1821-1857* (México: El Colegio de México, 2003), p.159.

²²⁵ Under the terms of the *Reglamento de Comercio* of 1814, flour imported from Spanish colonies was free of all tariffs, while other goods imported in Spanish ships were subject to a 12 to 16 percent tax; those coming in non-Spanish boats had a 16 to 20 percent tax. Cuba was the exception, as all goods exported to Yucatán from Cuba had a 9 percent tax. Source: Juan Francisco Molina Solís, *Historia de Yucatán desde la independencia hasta la época actual* (Mérida: Talleres Gráficos de La Revista de Yucatán, 1921), p.9.

²²⁶ Campos García, *Que los yucatecos*, p.162.

first city in Mexico to hoist the flag, and the Deputation quickly interpreted it as an act of disrespect to Spain and the constitution.²²⁷

On 22 October the *iturbidistas* then interrupted a session by the Campechean *ayuntamiento* and read aloud a *pronunciamiento* which they had formulated that day. They demanded that all authorities swear independence (instead of merely proclaiming it), and fully implement and respect the 21 articles of the Plan of Iguala and the 17 articles of the Treaties of Córdoba.²²⁸ They were soon followed by a second group demanding the reestablishment of *teniente de rey* León (who had been replaced by Hilario Artacho since June 1820) and *jefe político* Miguel Duque de Estrada (who had been dismissed by the Deputation following the *motín* of 13 October) in their posts.²²⁹ The *ayuntamiento* quickly called together a junta made up of powerful military, administrative and ecclesiastic figures,²³⁰ and just after a few hours, it declared that “convencido de la justicia de la solicitud, y de lo general del pronunciamiento, resolvió, se procediese sin demora alguna a jurar la independencia, en los términos pedidos, y se verificó, recibiendo juramento a todos los individuos de la junta.”²³¹ It also granted Duque de Estrada and León their former positions. This violence by upset factions would signal yet another aspect of the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento*. Dissatisfied parties would constantly threaten armed force if they were opposed to the *pronunciamiento* issued (this would be the case in 1824 and 1834).

The mutiny in Campeche was enough of a scare for the Meridians; on 2 November 1821 a junta met in Mérida, and resolved to unite with Mexico. The *ayuntamiento* of Campeche, witnessing the success of its demands, now took an even stronger stance against

²²⁷ *El Yucateco o el Amigo del Pueblo*, 3 November 1821.

²²⁸ *Proclamación jurando la Independencia elevado en Campeche*, October 22, 1821, Benson Latin American Collection: Colección Juan E. Hernández y Dávalos No.1431.

²²⁹ Aznar Barbachano and Carbó, *Memoria*, p.23.

²³⁰ Bernadino Mena Brito, *Reestructuración Histórica de Yucatán (Influencia negativa de los políticos campechanos en los destinos de México y de Yucatán de 1821 a 1855)* Tomo 1 (México: Editores Mexicanos Unidos, S.A., Luis González Obregón 5-B; I.D.F, 1965), p.20.

²³¹ Alejandro Negrín Muñoz, *Campeche: una historia compartida* (Gobierno del Estado de Campeche: Instituto de Investigaciones Dr. José María Luis Mora), pp.26-36; Álvarez, *Anales Históricos*, p.138.

the Deputation, sending a letter on 5 November refusing to recognise Ech  verri as governor, and declaring that Le  n was now *jefe superior pol  tico* and captain general of the entire peninsula.²³² In a junta convened on 8 November 1821, in the face of unrelenting Campechean pressure, Captain General Ech  verri renounced his position, stating that he believed “lejos de creer que con su permanencia en   l se impedir  a la anarqu  a, por el contrario estaba persuadido que la ocasionara.”²³³ The same junta nevertheless resolved that Le  n was not to be recognised in any official position.²³⁴ Instead, the junta handed the post of the intendancy to Pedro Bolio, and the post of military commander to Sergeant Major Benito Aznar.²³⁵

Needless to say, Campecheans were enraged, and stubbornly declared that Le  n was to assume both commands.²³⁶ The result was that Pedro Bolio (acting as *jefe superior politico*) and Benito Aznar (acting as military commander) governed M  rida, while Le  n ruled Campeche and its environs, acting as both governor and captain general. Both groups sent separate representatives to National Congress in Mexico City; M  rida sent Francisco Antonio Tarrazo and Juan Rivas Vertiz, and Campeche sent Jos   Mariano Cicero and Juan Esteban de Reque  a. With both cities stubbornly clinging on to their sovereignty over their areas, the governance of Yucat  n would continue this way for several months. Indeed, when centrally appointed Governor Melchor   lvarez arrived in Yucat  n in March 1822 to take up his post (thus replacing all ruling figures), he declared that he had found “la Provincia en una perfecta anarqu  a manteni  ndose independientes uno de otro el partido de Campeche y el de M  rida y resto de la Provincia.”²³⁷

²³² Lanz, *Compendio de historia*, p.183.

²³³ *Acta de la Junta General de esta capital de todas las autoridades, corporaciones y jefes*, Benson Latin American Collection, Colecci  n Arrigunaga, 8 November 1821.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*

²³⁵ *Ibid.*

²³⁶ Baranda, *Recordaciones*, p.119.

²³⁷ Melchor   lvarez, *Informe sobre el estado de la Provincia de su mando en todos sus ramos*, AGN, Gobernaci  n, Sin Secci  n, Caja 17, Exp.19, Exp.9, M  rida, 23 April 1822.

The *pronunciamiento* of 1821, beginning so positively with the hope of independence, had evidently soon caused unrest within the Yucatecan region, mainly due to its manipulation by the *camarillero* elite. This *pronunciamiento* was already demonstrating characteristics which were to become prominent in future *pronunciamientos* of Yucatán: the need for adherence to a national movement in order to realise a successful regional *pronunciamiento* had already been established, and this would not change for the next twenty years. While an outside impetus had to generate the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento*, its nature would nevertheless be conditioned by local forces in the peninsula. Moreover, the hijacking of these national *pronunciamientos* by local elites, who nevertheless claimed to represent the voice of many, was to dominate the most significant *pronunciamientos* in Yucatán. This adaptation of the *pronunciamiento* to serve an elite faction would trigger opposition in other sectors, another factor which was to be present. This elite manipulation did not mean that there was no ideological drive behind the *pronunciamiento*. It was not only a political practice in terms of holding on to local power, but in terms of fulfilling ideas and ideals. Indeed, the *sanjuanistas*, *camarilleros*, and *rutineros* had all demonstrated distinct principles and desires in their motivations for seconding the Plan of Iguala, be them liberal, regionalist, or clerical. Finally, the use of the *pronunciamiento* to open negotiation with Mexico would be a continual manifestation during the early independent years, meaning that the Yucatecan *pronunciamientos* were to be clear signposts of the fluctuating relations which were to occur between the peninsula and Mexico. This use of the *pronunciamiento* as a negotiating tactic between local and national powers would be even more heavily manifest in the very next *pronunciamiento* of Yucatán; the assault of the centralist Iturbide empire on elite autonomy would provoke powers in the peninsula to use the *pronunciamiento* as a powerful tool of national lobbying, as they defended their interests against a new “outside” power: Mexico.

Federalism and Inter-Regional Factionalism: The *Pronunciamientos* of 1823-1824

The Geographical position of Yucatan renders it in many respects independent of the rest of the Mexican Territory. [...] its connection with Mexico for social or political purposes may be said to have always been rather nominal than real.²³⁸

The *pronunciamientos* of 1823 and 1824 signified the first phases of the evolution of the practice in a newly independent Yucatán. The 1823 *pronunciamiento* seconding the national movement inspired by the regional plans of Veracruz of 1822 and of Casa Mata of 1823 demonstrated a significant development in the practice: as an instrument by the *regions* to forcefully negotiate with the newly formed Mexican national administration for political change. Indeed, through the *pronunciamiento*, elites in the regions reacted to the negative experience of the centralist Iturbide administration which had assaulted their previous strong realms of political and economic autonomy. In Yucatán, the Iturbide regime would harm the interests of the elite and powerful *camarilleros*, the radical liberal *sanjuanistas*, and the Spaniards, all in different ways. The *pronunciamientos* of 1823 (for there were several in Yucatán during the year) thus demonstrated the realisation in nineteenth-century Yucatán (and Mexico) that *pronunciamientos* (and power) could originate from the regions and target the Mexican administration. Moreover, these regional *pronunciamientos* could assert themselves over the will of the powerful politicians in Mexico City as they called for national political change if circumstances demanded it.

The *pronunciamiento* of 1824, issued by the Campechean elite against the Meridian politicians and merchants – due to the latter's refusal to obey the national 1823 decree of war

²³⁸ Letter from Richard Pakenham to Lord Aberdeen, The National Archives, F.O.50/135, Mexico, 21 April 1840.

against Spain – would demonstrate an even further advancement of the practice; there was yet another sub-level of utilisation, as *pronunciados* adapted the practice from a regional to a local (or inter-regional) exercise. Indeed, for the first time in 1824, one local faction (the Campecheans) would use the *pronunciamiento* directly against another (the Meridians). Yucatecans had evidently realised that the *pronunciamiento* did not have to express political opinion just nationally, but could be used as a vehicle of local protest as well. The commencement of the use of the *pronunciamiento* as a local exercise began in this *pronunciamiento* of 1824, but the fact that this *pronunciamiento* would protest against disobedience to Mexico highlighted the still permeable influence of Mexican relations in inspiring the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* (which had been a trend formed since independence).

The Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* of 1823 seconding the plans of Veracruz and Casa Mata, although part of a national movement, was intensely local in the aspect that it reflected several socio-political factions' desires in Yucatán to repel the centralist attempts of the Mexican Empire and to regain the relative autonomy which Yucatecan elites had enjoyed previous to the union with Mexico. It is relevant to remember that from the onset, unconditional unification with Mexico was not what the Yucatecan *camarillero* elite had hoped for in the accomplishment of independence. Pressured to proclaim independence by the rebellious *iturbidistas* (headed by then *teniente de rey* Juan José León) in Campeche in October 1821, the *camarilleros*' aim had still been to preserve their hold on the region, as their *pronunciamiento* of independence had evidently been designed to maintain their political domination of the region. Additionally, the terms of unification proposed by the *camarillero*-dominated Provincial Deputation to the Iturbide government in late 1821 were meant to preserve the economic and trade freedom enjoyed by the elite merchants. The forced union with Mexico in November had, however, led to the national government's complete

dismissal of these Yucatecan political and economic attempts at relative sovereignty. From the start of this new era the Deputation had thus become under the control of Mexico with no assurance of the preservation of its administrative and/or economic autonomy. There was consequently significant resentment, fear, and insecurity in placing the fate of Yucatecans' precious realm in the hands of a government more than a thousand kilometres away which knew nothing, and probably cared nothing, about their priorities and interests.

The more radical liberal *sanjuanistas*, while supporting the Plan of Iguala, had not been enthusiastic to unite with a centralist government; while they had all wanted independence, they were fearful that the Iturbide regime would debilitate the relative sovereignty of their region. It is significant to note that radical *sanjuanistas* such as Manuel Crescencio Rejón, Manuel García Sosa, José Matías Quintana and Francisco Tarrazo were all against the unification with the central government from the very beginning. In their minds, it constituted the “opresión del pueblo, y la impunidad de los empleos y funcionarios en sus arbitrariedades y abusos.”²³⁹ They thus immediately began discussing the usefulness of a republic as an alternative to this centralist system.²⁴⁰ Consequently, from the very advent of unification with Mexico, *camarilleros* and *sanjuanistas* already had one common interest: they could not achieve independence with the presence of the *iturbidista* faction in the peninsula, but they would work for the establishment of relative Yucatecan autonomy and the reduction of Mexico's power over their province, hopefully to be manifested in a federal republic, and which they would attempt to achieve, of course, through a *pronunciamiento*.

What more specific reasons would provoke these factions to pronounce for the empowerment of the regions throughout 1822 and 1823? The dominating factor was the assault on the economic and trade practices of Yucatán. Not only had the Mexican administration not accepted the Yucatecan economic negotiations for unification, but they

²³⁹ José Matías Quintana, “Desengaño al público” in *El Yucateco o El Amigo del Pueblo*, 20 September 1821.

²⁴⁰ Melchor Campos García, “La política yucateca en una etapa crisis económica: regionalismo, autonomía y separatismo, 1808-1835” (MA Diss, México: Universidad Autónoma de México, 1995), p.171.

demolished the Yucatecans' historically liberal trade conditions almost immediately. Two weeks after the Deputation had pledged its unification with the Mexican nation, on 15 November 1821 Iturbide's government abolished the liberal *reglamento de comercio* of 1814 (detailed in the previous chapter) which the Deputation had reimplemented following their declaration of independence on 15 September. Instead, the Mexican government ordered the imposition of customs duties at 25 percent of the invoice value of all imported and exported goods to and from overseas destinations (including Cuba and Jamaica, and the United States – Yucatán's main trade partners) throughout the empire. The 25 percent tax charge sent shockwaves throughout the commercial sector, as by September 1822, the officials of the Campechean treasury body declared that due to the inability to pay export taxes, the export of meat, meat products, and henequen had ceased completely. Lack of income from exports logically meant a severe drop in the financial ability to import products, with the same Campechean officials lamenting that "A nuestra bahía llegan ya pocas embarcaciones, y más adelante serán menos [...] queda este puerto reducido a solo el comercio de importación de sus precisos consumos."²⁴¹ These measures affected both *camarilleros* and *sanjuanistas*, as *camarilleros* Pedro Marcial Guerra, Joaquín García Rejón, Lorenzo Peón, Pedro Almeida, Pedro José Guzmán and Pedro Manuel de Regil (these last two being the most prominent merchants of Campeche) along with *sanjuanistas* José Tiburcio López, Eusebio Villamil, Crescencio José Pinelo, Ciprián Blanco, Francisco Tarrazo, José Matías Quintana and Pedro del Castillo all felt the strain of the loss of trade.²⁴² Discontent was manifest as by 4 May 1822, the members of the *ayuntamientos* of Campeche and Mérida declared that they refused to carry out the national economic policies, with Meridian *ayuntamiento* members such as businessmen José Tiburcio López, Joaquín Quijano, Manuel Carvajal and José Julián Peón

²⁴¹Letter from Pedro de Elizalde contador and D Manuel de la Mediavilla tesorero ministros de las cajas nacionales de hacienda pública de Campeche to Pedro Bolio, Intendente de la provincia, AGN, Gobernación, Sin Sección, Caja 47, Exp.2, 6 September 1822.

²⁴² Zanolli Fabila, "Liberalismo y Monopolio", p.274.

protesting specifically against the tariff of 25 percent on imports and exports.²⁴³ Moreover, the Deputation – also occupied by several members of the economic elite such as Pedro Bolio, Pedro Almeida and Luciano Dorantes – chose to simply refuse to implement the economic decrees by mid-June 1822.²⁴⁴

The *camarillero*-occupied Provincial Deputation also lost significant political power due to the establishment of centrally-appointed Governor and Captain General (and *iturbidista*) Melchor Álvarez in January 1822. He came with an agenda contradictory to Yucatecan *camarillero* and *sanjuanista* desires: for Yucatecans to bow to the centralist regime in all political and economic matters, ensuring their obedience to the Mexican government and all its decrees.²⁴⁵ The *camarilleros* resented him because he was now the supreme authority of the peninsula, subjugating their leaders Military Commander Benito Aznar and *jefe superior político* Pedro Bolio. His imposition also incensed the *sanjuanistas* who were becoming aware of the increasing centralism of the Iturbide administration. On 3 February 1822, Governor Álvarez forced Pedro Bolio and the *ayuntamiento* of Mérida to not only swear their fidelity to Iturbide, but also to write to Zavala and López in National Congress at the time, ordering them to observe and respect the independent system.²⁴⁶

The swearing of Iturbide as emperor on 21 July 1822 only angered Yucatecan factions even further. For the *sanjuanistas*, this was a cause opposite to the one which they had pronounced for in 1821; they had wanted independence, not a centralist empire. For the elite *camarilleros* (who were also in their majority liberal, one should recall), it was only a confirmation of the loss of their regional power. So disgusted were both sections of liberals,

²⁴³ *Oficio del Ayuntamiento de Mérida a la Diputación Provincial*, Mérida, 4 May 1822 in *Copiador de oficios del Ayuntamiento de Mérida desde 13 de febrero de 1821 hasta 15 de octubre de 1822*, CAIHY.

²⁴⁴ Campos García, *Que los yucatecos*, p.69.

²⁴⁵ Letter from Melchor Álvarez to Agustín de Iturbide, Veracruz, in *Correspondencia oficial del Exmo. Sr. General dn Agustín de Iturbide con el Exmo Sr. Cap Gral de esta provincial*, CAIHY, Manuscritos, 11 February 1822.

²⁴⁶ “Sesión del 3 de febrero de 1822” in *Acuerdos del Ayuntamiento de Mérida desde 20 de febrero de 1821 hasta lo de marzo de 1822*; *Copiador de oficios del Ayuntamiento de Mérida desde 13 de febrero de 1821 hasta 15 de octubre de 1822*, CAIHY.

that the Yucatecan republican faction attending Congress in Mexico City (made up of *sanjuanistas* José Tiburcio López, Manuel Crescencio Rejón, Fernando Valle, and Francisco and Antonio Tarrazo), all boycotted the session of Congress on 19 May which declared Iturbide as emperor; Zavala would also later reflect in his *Ensayo Histórico* that he considered the crowning of Iturbide an unwise act.²⁴⁷ Subsequently Francisco Tarrazo was imprisoned, accused of participating in a republican conspiracy against Iturbide, only increasing *sanjuanista* discontent.²⁴⁸ Indeed, in May 1822, liberal Joaquín Casares y Armas, while in Havana, published various articles against Iturbide, condemning the farce of his proclamation as emperor and the tyranny which the monarchy represented.²⁴⁹ In August of the same year, when the deputies and other figures who had travelled to Mexico to see the coronation of Iturbide returned to Yucatán with their highly unfavourable impressions of the monarchy, the opinions pitted against the Iturbide Empire heightened considerably.

An unspoken and understood pact was now formed between the *camarilleros* and *sanjuanistas*; the struggle for internal power would be put aside in the face of a much larger external threat. The economic and political traumas in the peninsula throughout the past year were not to be blamed on any internal party, but on outside imposition and interference. Moreover, the creation of an empire was just too extreme. These circumstances were to cultivate a new – and very temporary – ideology among the liberal elite; it was a compact and united stand between *sanjuanistas* and *camarilleros* against *afuera*, taking privilege over any of their conflicts *adentro*.²⁵⁰ Any hope of a republic now depended on their united efforts, and this would be manifest in the next *pronunciamiento* to soon occur in the peninsula.

²⁴⁷ Zavala, *Ensayo Histórico* in Lorenzo de Zavala, *Obras: el historiador y el representante popular. Ensayo crítico de las revoluciones de México desde 1808 hasta 1830*. Prólogo, ordenación y notas de Manuel González Ramírez (México: Editorial Porrúa. S.A. Av. República Argentina, 15, 1969), pp.128-131.

²⁴⁸ *Sumaria información sobre averiguar los autores y cómplices de una conspiración proyectada para trastornar el gobierno establecido y sustituirle el republicano*, AGN, Gobernación, Sin Sección, Caja 2, 1822.

²⁴⁹ Campos García, “La política yucateca”, p.191; ‘Los Yucatecos’, *Compendio de la historia*, pp.7-8.

²⁵⁰ Zuleta, “Raíces y razones del federalismo peninsular: 1821-1825”, p.156.

These two factions were not to provide the only efforts behind the next *pronunciamiento* in Yucatán. If there was one sector of society more angered than the liberals at the news of Emperor Iturbide, it was the Spanish. In their eyes, a Mexican emperor was simply unacceptable. Indeed, liberal Spanish figures Juan Rivas Vertiz and Joaquín Castellanos had also boycotted the Congress session which had proclaimed Iturbide as emperor, subsequently quickly returning to Yucatán to avoid imprisonment in Mexico.²⁵¹ Upon their arrival, they began to spread the rumour among the Spanish that the *iturbidistas* had simply used the Bourbon cause as a ruse, and that the plan had been to crown a Mexican all along, adding that the event of “la proclamación [de Iturbide que] fue una borrachera.”²⁵² Additionally, the news in April that the Spanish crown had refused to recognise the Plan of Iguala and the Treaties of Córdoba, and was planning a military invasion of Mexico to reconquer it, had led the Spanish elites in Mexico to mobilise against Iturbide in a purely defensive move, needing to protect their own interests. In Yucatán, Spanish members of the permanent army such as José Cadenas, José María Ibarra, Esteban Paullada and Rafael Jimenez Montalvo proclaimed themselves to be anti-Iturbide²⁵³ with similar sentiments being echoed by the Spanish masons who were heavily present in liberal *yorkino* lodges in Campeche (represented by army officer Simón Ortega).²⁵⁴

Despite the high level of discontent emanating from these sectors, a *pronunciamiento* could not occur without significant cooperation or cooption of the military; and they

²⁵¹ Joaquín Castellanos, *Manifiesto: Sumaria información; Testimonio de las diligencias del proceso seguido a don Miguel Tamayo, por expresiones contrarias al gobierno imperial de Iturbide*, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Justicia, Vol.1, Exp.2, Mérida, 13 September 1822.

²⁵² Joaquín Castellanos, *Manifiesto*; Campos García, “La política yucateca”, p.185.

²⁵³ *Don Francisco de Ibarra primer síndico procurador general de esta ciudad (de Campeche) en uso de su presentación [...] manifestar a v.m. 1. La agitación en que ha puesto a este benemérito vecindario, y muy particularmente a la parte europea que le reside el teniente del batallón de Castilla fijo de esta plaza don José Julian Ancona [...]*, AGN, Gobernación, Sin Sección, Caja 25, Exp.1; Caja 39, Exp.3, Campeche, 19 November 1822.

²⁵⁴ *Segunda pieza y continuación de la causa de conspiración seguida contra d Simón Ortega, d Franco Ampudia, d Agustín Mier y Terán, d José Ontiveros y paisano d Manuel Castilla*, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Milicia, Vol.7, Exp.26, March 1823; *Copiador de la correspondencia de los gobernadores con autoridades de los pueblos de la Sierra Alta, del 6 de abril de 1822 al 1º de mayo de 1824*, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Correspondencia Oficial, Vol.1, Exp.3.

themselves were not very happy with the current political system. The bankrupt treasury in Yucatán had resulted in extreme underpayment – or even no salaries – of the active battalions along with a lack of food, clothing, and arms.²⁵⁵ Additionally, on 11 March 1822 the Mexican *Junta Instituyente* (the body succeeding Congress after Iturbide had ordered its dissolution on 31 October 1822) had decreed the reduction of whatever salaries were left for all members of the permanent army, with cuts ranging from 8 to 16 percent (much to Iturbide's disgust, it should be noted).²⁵⁶ Added to this, those returning from Mexico brought rumours of prestigious and well-known military men such as Vicente Guerrero, Nicolás Bravo, Guadalupe Victoria and Pedro Celestino Negrete supporting the idea of a republic.²⁵⁷ This meant that by June 1822, the Yucatecan military (army and active battalions) started claiming that the empire would only last six months. Consequently, the Meridian-based First Active Battalion (under the command of *camarillero* Benito Aznar) began planning to pronounce for a republic in mid-1822.²⁵⁸

By the end of 1822, when news of Iturbide's order to dissolve Constituent Congress reached the peninsula, the imperial government in Yucatán was practically finished, and its grave was completely dug when the *Junta Instituyente* decreed on 5 November the end of commerce with Spain and all its colonies. The end of legal trade with Cuba meant the near – if not complete – termination of business activities for the merchants of Mérida. This was in complete opposition to the terms of unification which the Yucatecan Provincial Deputation had stated to the national government in September 1820. The preservation of commercial relations with Cuba had been absolutely essential to the survival of the Yucatecan economy, being one of the region's main sources of income. Indeed, the Meridian *ayuntamiento*

²⁵⁵ Letter from Pedro de Elizalde and Manuel de Mesianilla to the Intendant of the Province, AGN, Gobernación, Sin Sección, Caja 47, Exp.2, 6 and 10 September 1822.

²⁵⁶ Anna, *El imperio de Iturbide* (México, D.F: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes: Alianza Editorial, 1991), p.142.

²⁵⁷ Joaquín Castellanos, *Manifiesto*; Campos García "La política yucateca", p.186.

²⁵⁸ *Copiador de oficios del Ayuntamiento de Mérida desde 16 de octubre de 1822 hasta 30 de diciembre de 1823*, CAIHY.

calculated that it provided an average of 500,000 pesos a year to the peninsula. In that administration's words. "la isla de Cuba [...] es el único punto en que se expiden nuestros frutos [...] quedaremos llorando esta inesperable pérdida."²⁵⁹

There was now a congregation of sectors in Yucatán which were pitted against Iturbide. The centralist despotic empire represented everything which was in opposition to the *sanjuanista* ideals of independence. The *camarilleros* had lost political and economic dominance over their treasured realm. The Spanish felt tricked, disillusioned, and threatened by the crowning of a Mexican emperor in a nation which had turned hostile to Spain. The severely underpaid military had no loyalty to an administration which had caused their suffering. The time was ripe for a *pronunciamiento*; yet Yucatecans did not mobilise, but waited for a sign from without. Indeed, the only *pronunciamiento* which they had ever experienced had been an adherence to a national act (Iguala), therefore it made sense to them to wait for a larger movement to occur before they simply issued a *pronunciamiento de adhesión*. Additionally, Yucatecans knew that their bankrupt region did not have the resources to head a nationally-directed *pronunciamiento*; they were heavily lacking in arms supplies and the strategic location needed to effectively negotiate for change. The potential *pronunciados* consequently waited for a more powerful national movement to second.

They did not have to wait long. On 27 December 1822, during the formal dance of the final night of official celebrations for the swearing in of Emperor Iturbide, a boat from Veracruz arrived, bringing notice of two *pronunciamientos* by General Antonio López de Santa Anna in Veracruz earlier that month. The *Proclama del General Santa Anna* of 2 December 1822 was the first of the two *pronunciamientos*, calling for the end of the empire, the formation of a republic, and the preservation of the Three Guarantees of the *Plan de Iguala*. The Mexican government was to establish an armistice with the Spanish forces in San

²⁵⁹ Copiador de oficios del Ayuntamiento de Mérida de 13 de febrero de 1821 hasta 15 de octubre 1822, CAIHY.

Juan de Ulúa, and, of extreme significance for Yucatecans, was to allow a recommencement of trade relations with Spanish colonies, along with the low tariff rates of 1812. Despite the national demands of the *pronunciamiento*, it was clearly mixed with very local Veracruzán issues; the constant battle between Spanish and Mexicans in the fort of San Juan de Ulúa had been harming the Veracruzán business sector, and its trade with Cuba was suffering just as badly as Yucatán's. The Yucatecans thus identified not only with the fact that it was a regional *pronunciamiento*, but that the Veracruzán woes were so similar to theirs.

More significantly this predominantly locally-inspired *pronunciamiento* exerting national demands over the centre was something novel in Mexican politics. Despite the locality of its origins, the *pronunciamiento* was careful to state that it was serving "la voz imperiosa de todos los habitantes de esta América Septentrional"²⁶⁰ in order to attempt to highlight its national ideology and thus gain the support needed for a regional *pronunciamiento* to be accepted and adopted by the majority of the country. Santa Anna's second *pronunciamiento*, the *Plan de Veracruz* (which the well-known military figure and old enemy of Iturbide, Guadalupe Victoria had helped to collaborate, and Colombian politician Miguel Santa María had written) of 6 December declared the end of the recognition of Iturbide as Emperor, but made no mention of the republic which Santa Anna had pronounced for just four days earlier. Instead, it declared that the nation was now entitled to form the government which it thought was most appropriate. Additionally, the *pronunciamiento* called for the restoration of the Congress which Iturbide had dissolved earlier that year.²⁶¹ This *pronunciamiento* was evidently a more nationally-oriented exercise, containing openly vague ideological declarations concerning the political systems to be established, perhaps in an effort to widen its potential triumph through appeal to an even greater spectrum of society.

²⁶⁰ <http://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/pronunciamientos/database/index.php?f=y&id=744&m=12&y=1822>

²⁶¹ Benson, *La Diputación Provincial*, pp.120-121.

The news of the Veracruzán-inspired yet nationally-directed *pronunciamientos* only encouraged the Yucatecans to pronounce against the centralist empire, but there was repression present in the peninsula. Powerful *iturbidistas* still existed in the region, with their stronghold in Campeche. The *teniente de rey* Juan José de León, some members of the permanent army in Campeche, and a numerous clergy who had appreciated the clerical protection of the Plan (represented by powerful parish priests José Mariano de Cicero and ex-*sanjuanista* Vicente María Velásquez) were all against the *pronunciamientos* of Veracruz. It should be noted that with the exception of Velásquez, these were the same figures who had led the agitations in Campeche in 1820 for the swearing of the Plan of Iguala.²⁶² Governor Álvarez himself was also a fervent *iturbidista*; on the very same day in which the news of Santa Anna's *pronunciamientos* reached the region, he issued a decree declaring that order be maintained in the peninsula, as well as simultaneously granting *teniente de rey* León political as well as military command in order to quash any rebellious spark which may have been started.²⁶³ The *iturbidistas* then started a *motín* on 31 December, headed by *presbítero* Vicente Mendez and other figures from the clergy, along with several army officers, who revolted for the preservation of the Empire and its leader, proclaiming “¡Viva la religión y el Emperador!” in Campeche.²⁶⁴

The *iturbidista* actions within the region would nevertheless fail to suffocate the *pronunciamiento* spark that was to come not from within, but from without and which would deal the final blow to the Iturbide empire. While Santa Anna's *pronunciamientos* had not been immediately successful, they had paved the way for the third and final *pronunciamiento* of this cycle, the Plan of Casa Mata.²⁶⁵ The *Acta de Casa Mata* of 1 February 1823 originated

²⁶² Campos García, “La política yucateca”, pp.171-172.

²⁶³ Molina Solís, *Historia de Yucatán*, pp.7-8.

²⁶⁴ Aznar Barbachano and Carbó, *Memoria*, p.26.

²⁶⁵ Will Fowler and Juan Ortiz Escamilla stress the importance of these *pronunciamientos* in Will Fowler and Juan Ortiz Escamilla, “La revuelta del 2 de diciembre de 1822: una perspectiva regional”, in *Historias* 47 (September-December 2000), pp.19-37.

in Veracruz and was led by José Antonio Echávarri, the First Commander of the Imperial Army who had deserted his troops to lead the movement, primarily in protest against Iturbide's dissolution of Congress.²⁶⁶ In his *pronunciamiento*, Echávarri proposed a new congress, and assigned to the army the function of protector of the constitutional system, which had been so badly damaged by the Emperor. A much more delicate and subtle document than Santa Anna's *pronunciamientos*, this plan did not even contain the word "republic" in it.

The attraction of the plan of Casa Mata did not lay in its vagueness, but for Yucatán (and the majority of provinces in Mexico) its appeal lay in its Article Nine, which declared "la Diputación Provincial de esta provincia será la que delibere en la parte administrativa, si aquella resolución fuese de acuerdo con su opinión."²⁶⁷ The provinces immediately chose to recognise this as not only the temporary and absolute political and administrative empowerment of the Deputation of Veracruz, but of all Provincial Deputations in Mexico. Elites in the majority of the regions interpreted this as a measure which enabled them to recover the power which had been severely debilitated by the centralist empire over the past two years, and the Plan gained a rapid and resounding success throughout the entire empire as Provincial Deputations rushed to take command of their provinces. According to Benson, the Plan of Casa Mata was thus "a provincial plan,"²⁶⁸ as it represented "la expresión política del malestar de las provincias por el despotismo y la arbitrariedad del gobierno general."²⁶⁹ Additionally, as Anna stated, it "opened the ultimate door to the onset of provincial autonomy."²⁷⁰ It must be noted that Casa Mata also called for the formation of a new Congress; thus creating the chance to reset the national political agenda entirely, with

²⁶⁶ Anna, *El imperio de Iturbide*, pp.185-186.

²⁶⁷ <http://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/pronunciamientos/database/index.php?f=y&id=747&m=02&y=1823>

²⁶⁸ Benson, "The Plan of Casa Mata", p.52.

²⁶⁹ Hira de Gortari Rabiela, "El federalismo en la construcción de los estados" in Jaime E. Rodríguez O. (ed), *Mexico in the Age of Democratic Revolutions: 1750-1850* (Boulder, Colo.; London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994), p.212.

²⁷⁰ Anna, *Forging*, p.107.

regional elites now having a clearer idea of the systems which would benefit – and harm – them, and now having the chance to nominate individuals who could represent their most precious local priorities.

The regional powers had thus adopted and shaped a *pronunciamiento* in order to serve their own desires, and this was to be only the beginning of hijacking national *pronunciamientos* and converting them into local ones in Mexico; indeed, the Yucatecan *camarilleros* had already done in it in 1821, and as shall be discovered, this was to become a dominant practice in Yucatán. In this instance, Yucatecans were quick to second Casa Mata. The military would now be the first *pronunciados*, highlighting their established essentiality in enacting the practice. The First Active Battalion, along with the Artillery Unit of the Permanent Army (commanded by José Cadenas)²⁷¹ together with the civic militias²⁷² seconded the *pronunciamiento* of Casa Mata in the town of Bécál on 3 March 1823. Key military political figures such as Interim Colonel Agustín López de Llergo (of the Second Active Battalion), *camarillero* and Sergeant Major of the Brigade of *ingenieros* José Segundo Carvajal (of the First Active Battalion), *camarillero* Commander of the Infantry Sebastián López de Llergo (of the Second Active Battalion), and Commissioner of the Regiment of the Active Battalions Agustín Duque de Estrada all signed, representing their respective bodies.²⁷³

The military officers claimed in the *pronunciamiento* that their duty was to “conciliar los grandes intereses de la nación, y afianzar la representación nacional”,²⁷⁴ essentially declaring that it was their duty to represent and protect their region’s interests, which they could only accomplish through the *pronunciamiento*. One should also recall that the Plan of Casa Mata had explicitly stated this in its text; this was to be just the beginning of this

²⁷¹ Aznar Barbachano and Carbó, *Memoria*, p.27; Manuel Lanz, *Compendio de historia*, p.210.

²⁷² *Copiador de oficios del ayuntamiento de Mérida. 18 de octubre de 1822. 30 de diciembre de 1823*, CAIHY.

²⁷³ *Gaceta del Gobierno Supremo de México*, 12 April 1823.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

political role of the military. In the Yucatecan case, for decades to come, military-dominated *pronunciamientos* would declare in their respective texts that by pronouncing, they were simply fulfilling their duty of saving their people from unlawful and unbeneficial ruling administrations, on both local and national levels. In Antonio Annino's words, the military thus claimed to represent "la función de protector del estado desarrollado por el ejército, la primacía de la norma pacticia sobre la constitucional, la soberanía territorial como fundamento del principio de representatividad patriótica de todos los grupos oligárquicos."²⁷⁵ The military as the saviour of the *patria* thus had its defining role in the *pronunciamiento*. While this military participation constituted members of the permanent army (thus justifying this claim of officers stepping in to save a nation where political institutions were ineffective), one must remember the civilian character of the active battalions who were also taking part in the *pronunciamiento*. These men also had civilian occupations (be them merchants, *hacendados*, or politicians). They were thus in major part using their military rank to excuse their intervention in unlawful politics. Additionally, the fact that this *pronunciamiento*'s demands were not militaristic, but political and economic, fortifies the view that significant civilian participation was taking place.

Camarilleros, *sanjuanistas* and businessmen now clamoured for an immediate seconding of the plan of Béal, and with the unspoken threat of military violence if he did not follow the military *pronunciados*, Governor Álvarez had no option but to arrange a *pronunciamiento de adhesión* in Mérida the very next day. On 4 March 1823 in Mérida, a junta made up of the Provincial Deputation and the *ayuntamiento* of Mérida, along with key civil, military and ecclesiastic authorities swore the plan²⁷⁶ agreeing to all articles of Casa

²⁷⁵ Antonio Annino "Il patto e la norma ella origini della legalità oligarchia in Messico", *Nove Americana* 5 (1982), p.159, quoted in Marcello Carmagnani, "Territorialidad y federalismo en la formación del Estado mexicano" in Inge Buisson, Günter Kahle, Hans-Joachim König y Horst Pietschmann (eds.), *Problemas de la formación del estado y de la nación en Hispanoamérica* (Böhlau Verlag Köln Wien: 1984), p.212.

²⁷⁶ *Gaceta del Gobierno Supremo de México*, 12 April 1823.

Mata, “en todas sus partes.”²⁷⁷ Despite the national cause of the *pronunciamiento*, it was already showing signs of localism, as it chose to specifically support Article Five of the Plan of Veracruz of 6 December, which had stated that “Como independiente y soberana y libre, y en un estado natural, tiene plena facultad para constituirse conforme le parezca que más conviene a su felicidad, por medio del Soberano Congreso Constituyente.”²⁷⁸ It was thus not only a local adaptation of the Plan of Casa Mata, but a highly regional reaction to the attacks on economy and politics which the elite had undergone during the Iturbide Empire.²⁷⁹

In Campeche, Simón Ortega (*alcalde primero* of the Campechean *ayuntamiento*) led the *pronunciamiento de adhesión*, where the Second Active Battalion, along with several economic and clerical officials attended. The *pronunciamientos de adhesión* of Yucatán highlighted the temporary unification of sentiment among *camarilleros*, *sanjuanistas* some of the permanent army, and the active battalions against the empire. They also served to show the clear split between those supporting the regional *pronunciamientos*, and those *iturbidistas* still loyal to the centralist system and its ruler. Indeed, *iturbidistas* such as *teniente de rey* León and his followers Alejandro Villajuana, Juan Estevan Arfían, Ignacio de la Roca, Juan Nepomuceno Trujillo, Policarpio Sandoval, Jacinto Cardos and Antonio Carrillo had stubbornly refused to sign the Meridian *pronunciamiento de adhesión*, claiming that they preferred to wait on the political system which would be implemented in Mexico. The Campechean *pronunciamiento de adhesión* subsequently stated in Article Six the dismissal of these officials, with León being replaced by Sebastián López de Llergo. Also, it was agreed to free Joaquín Castellanos from prison, and suspend the persecutions against anti-*iturbidistas* Juan Rivas Vertiz, Felix Merino, Francisco Rodríguez, José del Carmen Perez, Perfecto

²⁷⁷ Ibid.

²⁷⁸ <http://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/pronunciamientos/database/index.php?f=y&id=745&m=12&y=1822>

²⁷⁹ Zanolli Fabila, “Liberalismo y Monopolio”, pp.171; 253.

Baranda and Francisco Aguilar.²⁸⁰ As Vázquez has pointed out, in this sense, *pronunciamiento* texts “se convirtieron en uno de los vehículos más eficaces de politización y de información sobre los problemas del país, al tiempo que difusión del sentimiento nacional,”²⁸¹ with Guerra agreeing that they were “una preciosa fuente para captar sus imaginarios, valores y las prácticas políticas.”²⁸²

The adhesion to the *pronunciamiento* of Casa Mata would again open the door (as in 1821) to efforts at negotiation between the Yucatecan elite (along with the elite of other regions in this case) and the Mexican administration for the complete revision of the national political system. In Yucatán, the first step was the now instinctively defensive reaction of the *camarilleros* whenever they were placed in a situation where they had to negotiate: declare secession from Mexico until the national administration attended to their demands. On the same day of 4 March the Deputation thus proclaimed Yucatán as an independent state, as its members assumed the right to complete government and internal administration of the region,²⁸³ stating:

roto el pacto que las unía al gobierno del imperio, cada una había regresado a su estado natural, la de Yucatán se creyó libre y con derecho a su felicidad; pero su amor nacional, algunas razones traídas de su situación, unidas a la esperanza fundada en las luces del actual congreso, la habían tenido vacilante, hasta que el espíritu general obligó a sus representantes a tomar la indicada resolución, en obvio de los horribles males que la oprimen.²⁸⁴

After Governor Álvarez almost immediately resigned from his post pleading illness (Casa Mata-itis perhaps), his replacement *camarillero* Pedro Bolio declared on 7 March that all the economic and administrative decrees of the past two years by the Mexican *Junta Instituyente* were null and void, consequently restoring the conditions which Yucatecans had enjoyed

²⁸⁰ *Acta del ayuntamiento de Campeche*, 6 March 1823, in *Gaceta del Gobierno Supremo*, 17 April 1823; Campos García, *De provincia a estado de la república mexicana: la península de Yucatán, 1786-1835* (Mérida, Yucatán: CONACYT-UADY, 2004), p.82.

²⁸¹ Vázquez, “Reflexiones sobre el Ejército”, p.220.

²⁸² Guerra, “El pronunciamiento”, p.16.

²⁸³ *Gaceta del Gobierno Supremo*, 14 June 1823.

²⁸⁴ Zanolli Fabila, “Liberalismo y Monopolio”, p.167.

prior to unification with Mexico in 1821.²⁸⁵ When in mid-March 1823 the news arrived that Iturbide had abdicated, the Yucatecan *iturbidistas*, seeing the glaring defeat in both national and local terms, retreated.²⁸⁶

In mid-April, after receiving the news on the reinstallation of Congress and the establishment of the triumvirate (led by Pedro Celestino Negrete, Nicolás Bravo and Guadalupe Victoria) on 29 March, the Yucatecan Deputation issued a *pronunciamiento* which declared that it would recognise National Congress, but conditioned in Article Four that:

siendo demasiado preciosa la libertad para aventurarla absolutamente a un gobierno, cuya Constitución aun se ignora; acabando de enseñar la triste experiencia de igual confianza que puso en el gobierno anterior que abusando de ella; la sujetó a su despotismo, por medio de los empleados militares y políticos que colocó a su frente [...] que no procederá el poder Ejecutivo a enviar empleados civiles o militares.²⁸⁷

Once more, elites were demonstrating through a *pronunciamiento* (as in 1821) their natural preference for relative provincial sovereignty; in the words of Ortiz Escamilla, “Although the *pronunciamientos* of Iguala (1821), Veracruz (1822), and Casa Mata (1823) each had their own dynamic, we cannot ignore that in essence they were all were part of the same problem: independence, provincial autonomy, and the form of the national government.”²⁸⁸

As in 1821, Yucatecans knew full well that the region depended on Mexican aid and markets; the only solution now was to lobby for political change with the national administration. Efforts at negotiation with Mexico soon got under way, and Yucatecans saw no better way to accomplish this feat than through a *pronunciamiento*. Weeks of discussions found Yucatecan elites agreeing on a federalist system; Yucatán was too poor to survive on

²⁸⁵Benson, *La Diputación Provincial*, p.128; *Acuerdo sancionado por Melchor Álvarez*, Mérida, 7 March 1823, in *Gaceta del Gobierno Supremo*, 15 April 1823.

²⁸⁶ *Copiador de oficios del ayuntamiento de Mérida desde 18 de octubre de 1822 hasta 30 de diciembre de 1823*, CAIHY.

²⁸⁷ *Gaceta del Gobierno Supremo*, 14 June 1823.

²⁸⁸ Ortiz Escamilla, “The Determining Region” (in press).

its own, but it could not risk another “*intento centralizador*”²⁸⁹ Iturbide experience. The *sanjuanista* desire for relative independence and the elites’ hunger for rule over their private realms, combined with the inevitable economic need to unite with a greater power now meant that a republic had to be the solution. As Zanolli Fabila so aptly put it, “*liberalismo y monopolio, eran fuerzas en juego en los momentos mismos en que el federalismo se materializaba en nuestro país.*”²⁹⁰

Federalism was thus to be the answer; a *junta general* meeting in Mérida on 29 May, constituted of the *ayuntamiento* representatives, the Provincial Deputation, and military officers, issued a *pronunciamiento* declaring that “*la unión de Yucatán será la de una república federada, y no en otra forma, y por consiguiente tendrá derecho para formar su constitución particular y establecer las leyes que juzgue convenientes a su felicidad.*”²⁹¹ Campechean member of the Provincial Deputation Miguel Duque de Estrada ensured that the *pronunciamiento* was realised in Campeche two days later, with the *ayuntamientos* of the towns throughout the region also issuing their *pronunciamientos de adhesión*. Yucatecans had now pronounced that federalism was to be the only option; they had for a second time used the *pronunciamiento* as an exercise of political negotiation between the region and the central administration, clearly expressing their political ideology and identity.²⁹² This employment of the *pronunciamiento* was to endure for decades to come, as the majority of significant Yucatecan *pronunciamientos* to occur in the peninsula would have this unchanging objective of national negotiation for a defined political system.

The federalist efforts commenced by the *pronunciamiento* were to continue throughout the year; the elected *Junta Gubernativa* (which replaced the Provincial

²⁸⁹ Luis Medina Peña, *Invencción del sistema político mexicano: forma de gobierno y gobernabilidad en México en el siglo XIX* (México, D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2007), p.132.

²⁹⁰ Zanolli Fabila, “Liberalismo y Monopolio”, p.7.

²⁹¹ Baqueiro, *Ensayo Histórico*, pp.245-251.

²⁹² This was an isolated Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* in its own right; there was no direct reference to any other pro-federalist *pronunciamientos* occurring in Mexico at the time.

Deputation on 30 May)²⁹³ declared on 14 June to the Mexican government that Yucatán was to be part of Mexico only under the system of a federal republic, declaring “es imposible que unas mismas leyes sean adaptables a hombres de diversas provincias, que tienen distintas costumbres, que viven en distintos climas.”²⁹⁴ They also defended their right to federalism as a natural consequence of their distance from the centre, adding that “la localidad de Yucatán, su comercio, las opiniones de sus habitantes generalmente [son] inclinados al gobierno republicano [...] no debían esperarse de otra forma de gobierno.”²⁹⁵ These powerful negotiations did not go unrecognised by Lucas Alamán, then secretary of state and minister of interior and exterior relations, who on 6 August condemned the Yucatecan Junta for trying to pressure the government to proclaim a federal republic. In reply, the Junta issued a statement using typical *pronunciamiento* rhetoric: “La provincia de Yucatán [...] no ha hecho otra cosa que usar de un derecho [...] y seguir la inclinación de los pueblos”,²⁹⁶ also declaring that it had been “Comportándose en su *pronunciamiento* con toda la circunspección que exigía negocio tan interesante: respetando los derechos de los demás pueblos e invocando la unión y amistad de las otras provincias.”²⁹⁷

The first Yucatecan Constituent Congress (replacing the Junta on 20 August 1823 and constituted of *camarillero* and *sanjuanista* liberals)²⁹⁸ continued Yucatán’s federal stance, issuing Yucatán’s *bases federativas* on 27 August 1823. Its very first article stated “Que el Estado de Yucatán es soberano e independiente de la dominación de cualquiera otro,

²⁹³ Among those who were members of the *junta gubernativa* were business figures (*sanjuanista* José Tiburcio López and *camarillero* Pablo Lanz); military men (Francisco Facio and Simón Ortega), and *camarillero* and Meridian priest Raimundo Pérez y González. See Campos García, *Que los yucatecos*, p.72.

²⁹⁴ *La Junta Provisional Gubernativa al Soberano Congreso*, AGN, Gobernación, Sin Sección, Caja 43, Exp.9, Mérida, 14 July 1823.

²⁹⁵ Baranda, *Recordaciones*, p.370.

²⁹⁶ Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, p.284.

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

²⁹⁸ Pedro José Guzmán, Manuel Milanés, Pedro Manuel de Regil, Pablo Moreno, and *sanjuanistas* Juan de Dios Cosgaya, Pedro Almeida, Manuel Jiménez Solís, Joaquín García Rejón, and Pablo and José Tirbucio López Constante were all members. See Benson, *La Diputación Provincial*, p.184; Zanolli Fabila, “La alborada del liberalismo yucateco” p.65; Zanolli Fabila, “Liberalismo y Monopolio”, pp.172; 203.

sea el que fuere.”²⁹⁹ Furthermore, the *bases* declared that sovereignty resided “esencial y colectivamente en los pueblos que componen este Estado”, and as a result, it was their exclusive and intrinsic right “de formar su régimen interior y el de acordar y establecer por medios constitucionales sus leyes.”³⁰⁰ Apparently, *pronunciamiento* rhetoric did not have to be strictly contained in the *pronunciamiento* text, but could be included in all dealings surrounding the *pronunciamiento* in order to justify its existence and its objectives.

The Yucatecan representatives who were elected to attend the Second National Constituent Congress (which was installed on 7 November 1823) also transported the essentiality of federalism on a national level. Even before national sessions began, the Yucatecan Congress had instructed that their deputies Manuel Crescencio Rejón, Alpuche Infante, Andrés Quintana Roo, Francisco Tarrazo and Lorenzo de Zavala only be empowered “para que como representantes del Estado de Yucatán, puedan formar la Constitución política de esta República federativa, democrática representativa.”³⁰¹ The provinces of Guanajuato, Guadalajara and Zacatecas had also placed similar restrictions on their delegates.³⁰² On 3 December, Congress opened the discussion of the type of political system which they would establish, and the voice of the regions and their determination for a federal system was overpowering, as on 31 January the federal *Acta Constitutiva* was issued with its Article Six declaring that Mexico’s nineteen created states were “libres, soberanos e independientes en lo que exclusivamente toque a su administración y gobierno interior.”³⁰³ It is also significant that the committee created to design the *Acta* had included representatives from the pro-federal provinces of Veracruz, Guadalajara, and federalist Manuel Crescencio Rejón of

²⁹⁹ Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, p.284.

³⁰⁰ Ibid.

³⁰¹ *Acta de la junta electoral provincial*, Mérida 28 July 1823, quoted in Campos García, “La política yucateca”, p.208.

³⁰² Jaime E. Rodríguez O. “The Constitution of 1824 and the Formation of the Mexican State” in Jaime E. Rodríguez O (ed.), *The Origins of National Politics: 1808-1847* (Wilmington, DE: SR Books, 1997), p.77.

³⁰³ Brian R. Hamnett, “Factores regionales en la desintegración del régimen colonial en la Nueva España: el federalismo de 1823-1824” in Buisson et.al (ed.), *Problemas en la formación*, p.290.

Yucatán.³⁰⁴ The powerful negotiations of the regions had consequently finally triumphed, and in the words of Luis Medina Peña, “Todo ello fue resultado de una evidente realidad política que operó de la periferia al centro.”³⁰⁵

A newborn federal republic dawned in January 1824. Hope was permeable throughout Mexico, and especially in Yucatán, where the unrelenting struggle for a relative level of sovereignty had finally triumphed. *Pronunciamientos* had once more led to national change, and the *regions* had demonstrated that they had the power to achieve this. In Yucatán, the elites had used the *pronunciamientos* of 1823 to achieve the national ideology of federalism, but their motivations had been primarily local. They had also united their interests in the *pronunciamiento*, as *camarilleros*, *sanjuanistas*, and Spaniards had come together temporarily for the common cause of federalism. Nevertheless, inter-regional fragmentation was soon to reoccur in Yucatán, and factions were to enact their differences through a *pronunciamiento*; indeed, regional elites had already learnt that a *pronunciamiento* could originate in the regions and could serve very local purposes. The next *pronunciamiento* – to be issued in the space of a mere few months – would demonstrate the realisation among *pronunciados* that the now regional exercise did not even have to be part of a national cause, but could have a very local agenda, as they would now use the practice to target not the Mexican administration, but each other.

The Campechean-directed *pronunciamiento* of 1824 would be a concrete manifestation of the Meridian-Campechean rivalry which had long been present in the region. The Campechean loyalty to Mexico which had been demonstrated in the *pronunciamiento* of 1821 (the swearing the plan of Iguala) would again reveal itself through the practice of the *pronunciamiento*, as the same *pronunciados* of those years would aim to rectify Meridian disobedience to Mexico and its decrees. In late 1823, even while Yucatán was consolidating

³⁰⁴ Rodríguez O., “The Constitution of 1824”, p.78.

³⁰⁵ Medina Peña, *Invención del sistema*, p.133.

its position as a free and sovereign federal Mexican state, the declaration of war on Spain – and the consequent end of commercial ties with Cuba – caused a severe disruption in the Meridian elites' pledge to obey National Congress under a federal system. Evidently, the end of trade with Cuba implied the virtual bankruptcy of the Meridian treasury, as its income was almost entirely dependent on trade with the Cuban market. Campechean trade did not depend heavily on relations with Cuba, but on commercial ties to Mexican ports (more specifically Veracruz, Tampico and Matamoros). The refusal by the Meridian-dominated Congress to implement the decree, versus Campechean desires to obey the national government, inspired the latter to pronounce, demanding that the Meridian political and merchant circles completely submit to all national laws. The *pronunciamiento* had now evolved even further to become an inter-regional practice, with elites using it to accomplish immediate local political objectives, to express local political views within Yucatán, and to protest against administrative ills on a state level. It also now became a definitive expression of the struggle for financial and political power between the Meridian and Campechean elite circles. The differing attitudes towards Mexico demonstrated through this *pronunciamiento* highlighted that local rivalries were inextricably linked to the national picture, illustrating the increasingly inescapable context of Yucatecan relations with Mexico, especially with respect to the occurrence and dynamic of the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento*.

While federalism was being ratified in Mexico City in late 1823, Spanish troops headed by Commander Francisco Lemaire on the island garrison of Spanish stronghold San Juan de Ulúa recommenced their attack on Veracruz,³⁰⁶ as the return of absolute monarchy to Spain in 1823 had also brought with it plans of reconquest of the Americas, thus refreshing Spanish attacks on Mexico. Consequently, on 8 October 1823, the Mexican government

³⁰⁶ Sotelo Regil, *Campeche en la historia*, p.267.

declared war on Spain, and with it the end of mercantile relations with it and its colonies.³⁰⁷

On 19 November the Yucatecan Congress received the order to end all types of “comunicación política y mercantil con los españoles,” along with a request from General Guadalupe Victoria to send resources and arms to Veracruz.³⁰⁸ The Meridian authorities had already experienced the cessation of trade with Cuba just one year before, an exercise which had put important Meridian merchants out of business and which had sent the region almost completely bankrupt; they had no intention of reimposing this decree once more.

While the Meridian-based Congress (made up of *camarilleros* and *sanjuanistas*) had only just pledged to unite with the Mexican nation and to subordinate themselves to the general government, they were evidently now in a significant quandary with regard to the fulfilment of their obligations. In late November 1823 a special commission was consequently created to deliberate on the delicate situation. Constituted of members of Local Congress (which was dominated by *sanjuanistas* and *camarilleros*) Pablo Moreno, Francisco Genaro Cicero, Pedro Baranda, Joaquín García Rejón and Juan de Dios Cosgaya, the commission agreed to send military aid to Veracruz, but simultaneously declared that the Yucatecan government was to be allowed to freely express its opinion on the rupture of trade relations with Spain.³⁰⁹ Ten pieces of artillery and other war supplies were sent from Campeche to Veracruz, but the authorities of the peninsula said nothing about agreeing to cut commercial ties with Cuba.³¹⁰

To the *camarillero* and *sanjuanista* businessmen, the end of commerce with Cuba was a completely distinct matter from the subject of war; it was solely a question of economic survival. The opposition to the order was dominant in Local Congress, where members such as *sanjuanistas* José Tiburcio López, Eusebio Villamil, Pedro Almeida, Manuel Jiménez

³⁰⁷ *Aguila Mexicana*, 12 October 1823; Campos García, *De provincia*, p.109.

³⁰⁸ *Acuerdos de la Junta Provisional Gubernativa, 1823-1824*, CAIHY; *Sesión del Congreso del 19 de noviembre*, CAIHY; *Gaceta de Mérida*, 6 December 1823.

³⁰⁹ *Gaceta de Mérida*, 6 December 1823; Campos García “Faccionalismo y votaciones en Yucatán”, p.69.

³¹⁰ Mena Brito, *Reestructuración Histórica de Yucatán*, pp.28-29.

Solís, and *camarilleros* Pedro José Guzmán, Juan Rivas and Manuel León were all affected by the trade decree, with members Raimundo Pérez and Francisco Bates declaring that the end of the commercial ties would be the ruin of Yucatán “que mendigaba su subsistencia de la isla de Cuba.”³¹¹ Congress decided in late November to suspend the declaration of war on Spain, and trade with Cuba would thus proceed normally.³¹² Yucatecan officials present in National Congress agreed in their majority with the stance taken by their political brothers, with José María Sánchez, Fernando Valle and Manuel Crescencio Rejón arguing that Yucatán should be excepted from the decree,³¹³ as in the words of Valle “Yucatán subsiste únicamente por su comercio marítimo que casi todo se hace con la isla de Cuba, y así cortada su comunicación con ésta, se le acaban también los recursos.”³¹⁴ Zavala was the only Yucatecan member in National Congress who believed that his fellow-natives should implement the declaration fully, as he argued that by maintaining relations with Cuba, Yucatán was “declarándose así enemigo de la Nación Mexicana.”³¹⁵

This attitude of the Meridians not only provoked anger in National Congress, but more importantly, in a city much closer to home: Campeche. Since the defeat of the *iturbidistas* earlier that year, Campechean resentment towards the *camarilleros*, the *sanjuanistas*, and the Spaniards had heightened considerably.³¹⁶ In the autumn of 1823 a distinct pro-Mexican, anti-Spanish group formed, calling themselves the *patriotas campechanos*. Made up of 73 members, the group mainly consisted of important military figures such as brothers Miguel and Agustín Duque de Estrada, Eduardo Vadillo, Ignacio de la Roca, José María León (son of *teniente de rey* Juan José de León), Tomás Requeña, and Pedro Baranda. Members of the Campechean business circle such as José del Carmen Pérez,

³¹¹ ‘Los Yucatecos’, *Compendio histórico*, p.15.

³¹² Campos García, *De provincia*, p.110.

³¹³ Sotelo Regil, *Campeche en la historia*, p.268.

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.269-271.

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.267.

³¹⁶ *Gaceta de Mérida*, 22 October 1823.

Joaquín Molina, Pedro Sancho and Joaquín Bueno, along with politicians such as Manuel Casares y Armas, Manuel Manzanilla, and Pedro de Elizalde also made up the group.³¹⁷ The *patriotas* declared themselves to be specifically against the hypocrisy and highly localist attitude of the Meridian powers, who they stated had claimed to unite with Mexico, but at the same time, were refusing to implement national decrees due to purely local business concerns. To the *patriotas* it was imperative that the *camarilleros* declare war; they feared that through the *camarilleros*' exercises, the independence of Yucatán and the Mexican nation was being heavily risked by not putting the state on a defensive stance with Spain.³¹⁸ Additionally, they believed that Yucatán's pledge of loyalty towards Mexico was being threatened by the disobedience of Local Congress. It must also be acknowledged that an end to relations with Cuba meant the annihilation of Meridian trade, and thus the elimination of Campeche's main commercial competition.³¹⁹ Additionally, businessmen in the east of the peninsula such as Domingo Trueva, José Antonio Boves and Fernando Gutiérrez were all supporting the declaration of war, as they were interested in ending the import of sugar from Cuba in order to stimulate their local cultivation of sugarcane.³²⁰

The *patriotas*' inspiration did have some input from national figures. As had been demonstrated in the *pronunciamientos* of 1821 and 1823, the regular army stationed in Campeche (now made up of the Sixth and Thirteenth Permanent Battalions) were following executive orders from Mexico. Mexican military caudillos like Guadalupe Victoria along with Minister of the Interior and Exterior Lucas Alamán were giving the garrison instructions to pressure the Meridian merchant circle to obey Mexican law. From the end of 1823 the

³¹⁷ Grupo de "patriotas campechanos" 1824-1825, AGEY, Justicia, Justicia Penal, Vol.3, Exp.20.

³¹⁸ Libro de sesiones secretas del Augusto Congreso Constituyente. De 23 de agosto de 1823 a 18 de abril de 1822, AGEY, Congreso, Sesiones, Vol.1, Exp.1.

³¹⁹ As noted in the previous chapter, while Mérida's main trade was with Cuba and the U.S., Campeche's principal trade partner was Mexico. The Campecheans' demand of cessation of trade with Cuba would consequently not only prove their loyalty to Mexico, but would debilitate their regional competition's trade practices.

³²⁰ Campos García, *De provincia*, p.110.

patriotas began to have open meetings in decided opposition to the disobedience of the Meridian-based Congress. They stated in their meetings that they refused to recognise the local government and Congress which they called “de Mérida”, and which they claimed “trabajaban esforzadamente por no unirse a México ni declarar guerra a España para continuar sus truhanerías y despotismo insufrible en Yucatán.”³²¹ They also generated significant propaganda upholding the idea that the Spaniards were the causes of the misfortunes of the country, with the Campechean press circulating articles which affirmed that the true republican was distinguished by his “patriotismo, delicadeza, buena educación y honor”, while the “ultramarinos sean unos verdaderos enemigos de nuestra independencia.”³²² Actions were soon to manifest this anti-Spanish spirit; on 29 September 1823, the Campechean *ayuntamiento* ordered the arrest of the captain of a ship which had docked in its port to restock with supplies for the Spanish in San Juan de Ulúa. It later revoked the order, but *patriota* sentiment was manifested once more on 12 December, when the same Campechean *ayuntamiento* refused the landing of the ship *Constitución*, which was bringing Spanish businessmen fleeing San Juan de Ulúa and who were attempting to reestablish themselves in Yucatán.³²³ The ship was forced to carry on to Cuba instead.³²⁴ Local Congress was not unaware of the actions underway in Campeche; on 24 December 1823, it issued a severe decree condemning to death every person who “conspire directamente” against it, and who tried to disturb the system of federal republican

³²¹ *Correspondencia del Honorable Poder Ejecutivo a la secretaria del Augusto Congreso, de agosto 20 de 1823 a 20 de agosto de 1824*, CAIHY.

³²² *Expediente Segundo contra el c. Ignacio Francisco Cantarell y otras personas, presos en la ciudad de Campeche, acusados de falsarios por el c. Pablo Antonio Lenard*, AGEY, Justicia, Justicia Penal, Vol.2, Exp.2, August 1825.

³²³ The *camarillero* government had wished them to stay with the objective of converting Yucatán into an attractive state for the businessmen and the capitalists who were escaping the war. Indeed, this project had been supported by the local decree of 27 August of 1823, which guaranteed the right to political asylum for the foreigners, P.D.B., L.V, G.F.Q., *Representación al Augusto Congreso General, contestando al dictamen de la comisión especial nombrada para examinar las ocurrencias de Yucatán, con motivo de la declaración hecha por el supremo gobierno de la federación para continuar la Guerra con España, escrita por unos amantes de su gobierno* in *El Sol*, 6 April 1824; Molina Solís, *Historia de Yucatán*, p.19.

³²⁴ Molina Solís, *Historia de Yucatán*, p.20.

government (even though it was Congress itself which was ironically disobeying the federal administration).³²⁵ Congress continued to manifest its dominance over politics as on 31 January, while the *Acta Constitutiva de la Federación* was declared throughout Mexico, it (Congress) only published Article Five which declared that the nation adopted a popular representative federal republic, ignoring all other decrees.³²⁶

Needless to say, the *patriotas* were outraged, accusing the Yucatecan administration of being unpatriotic and putting the interests of the nation in peril. Despite this climaxing of Campechean resentment, no *pronunciamiento* would be issued, as Yucatecans once more waited for news of a national movement with similar aims to their own; regardless of the locality of the Campechean agenda, the potential *pronunciados* still needed a larger impetus in order to give their own local *pronunciamiento* some semblance of national legitimacy and strength. Indeed, the presence of a national *pronunciamiento* to identify with not only added ideological validity to the Campechean cause, but it also foresaw that if the *pronunciamiento* in the capital won, then so would theirs most likely have victory in Yucatán. This need to adhere to a larger *pronunciamiento* was becoming an interesting distinctive trait of the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento*. Unlike states which were relatively closer to Mexico City and consequently posed more of a serious armed threat if and when they pronounced (like Puebla, San Luis Potosí, Guerrero and Jalisco), or controlled vital Mexican ports (Veracruz), Yucatán was isolated, poor, and controlled hardly any resources needed in Mexico. A solitary Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* with national objectives would thus more than likely fail to pose any serious threat to the national administration in terms of armed threat or withholding of resources. The Yucatecans' failure at negotiation in 1821 for beneficial trade tariffs had already demonstrated this. Additionally, the peripheral character of Yucatán and the unique demands of its elite contributed to the state's lack of potential to inspire *pronunciamientos de*

³²⁵ Campos García, "La política yucateca", p.235.

³²⁶ Baranda, *Recordaciones*, pp.135-137; Will Fowler, *Santa Anna of Mexico* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), p.83.

adhesión from other states. Yucatecan *pronunciados* consequently realised that if any *pronunciamiento* of theirs was to have a chance of success, it had to adhere to a larger and more powerful movement occurring in “mainland” Mexico.

In early February came the news which the Campecheans had been waiting for; on 23 January 1824 Brigadier José María Lobato and the garrison of Mexico City had issued a *pronunciamiento* demanding in the text’s Article Two “Que sean removidos de sus destinos los españoles europeos.”³²⁷ Just as in 1821 and in 1823, Yucatecans would use a national cause to formulate their own local *pronunciamiento*. On 15 February 1824, “imitando la conducta de los que causaron los movimientos de esa capital en los días de 24 a 27 de enero ppo,”³²⁸ Campechean-based military chiefs José Antonio López, Gerónimo López de Llergo, Ignacio Roca, Eduardo Vadillo and José Ignacio Antezana called on then *primer alcalde* Agustín Duque de Estrada to take on functions of *jefe político* and to convene an extraordinary meeting on the very same day.³²⁹ The meeting, attended by *ayuntamiento* officials, military officers and merchants (made up in their majority of the *patriotas*), after an “acalorada y borrascosa” discussion, issued its *pronunciamiento* which demanded the complete unification of Yucatán with Mexico, “Guerra a España que nos hostiliza” and “Los empleos y destinos en americanos idóneos, moderados y decididos por nuestra emancipación, conservando los actuales jefes patricios o de escala, sin perjuicio del arreglo interior del Estado.”³³⁰ Campecheans had thus adopted a movement in Mexico City, but had clearly shaped and manipulated it to suit their own desires. The *camarilleros* had already demonstrated this hijacking of a national *pronunciamiento* in 1821 (declaring independence

³²⁷ Sotelo Regil, *Campeche en la historia*, p.267; *Enciclopedia Yucatenense*, Patrocinada por el gobierno del estado de Yucatán, a cargo del Dr. Francisco Luna Kan, Tomo II (Edición oficial del gobierno de Yucatán, ciudad de México: DF 1977), p.182.

³²⁸ Letter from Francisco Bates to the Sr. *Secretario del estado y del despacho de relaciones*, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Correspondencia Oficial, Vol.1, Exp.8, 9 April 1824.

³²⁹ Lanz, *Compendio de historia*, p.228.

³³⁰ Serapio Baqueiro, *Reseña geográfica, histórica y estadística del estado de Yucatán desde los primitivos tiempos de la península* (México: Imprenta de Francisco Díaz de León, calle de Lerdo número 2, 1881), p.65; Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, p.286; Baranda, *Recordaciones*, p.137; Letter by Francisco Bates to the Sr *Secretario del estado y del despacho de relaciones*, 9 April 1824.

without promising unification with Mexico), and now the *campechanos* were using their own *camarillero* tactics against them. With the sound of bells tolling and horns blowing, the *pronunciamiento* was celebrated throughout Campeche, while it was circulated to the local and national authorities.³³¹ The powerful army ensured that the *pronunciamiento* was immediately put into effect in the city, with *pronunciados* ordering the dismissal of Spanish figures Joaquín Trava, José Cadenas, Manuel Mediavilla, José de Argüelles, Rafael Montalvo, José Antonio Mediz, Antonio Cánovas, Esteban Paullada, Hilario de la Presa, Pedro Casas, Alejo Helguera, Pedro Rodríguez, and Lorenzo Vargas from their posts.³³²

The *pronunciamiento* had once more demonstrated the discrepancies between factions in the peninsula; Campecheans had tangibly expressed hatred towards the Spaniards, along with their (Campechean) loyalty to Mexico and anger against regionalist Meridians. Upon hearing of the proclamation in Campeche, Local Congress in Mérida denounced the *pronunciamiento* and the threat of disorder occurring in that city; *pronunciados* were only good, apparently, when *they* – the Meridian political elite – were involved (a theme which would be further developed in the 1830s). On 18 February, Local Congress then issued a decree which stated that any person found conspiring against the authorities or the Spanish “será perseguido conforme a las leyes, como atentador contra el orden y seguridad pública”,³³³ and on 28 February, local government ordered that it was allowed to use whatever resources needed to reestablish order in Campeche.³³⁴

Word soon came that the *pronunciamiento* of Lobato in Mexico City had not garnered sufficient support, and had consequently failed. With the loss of this national justification and a backbone to lean on, the Campechean *pronunciados* now quickly modified their demands in order to give some type of legitimacy to their movement. They consequently sent word in

³³¹ Molina Solís, *Historia de Yucatán*, p.21.

³³² Ibid.

³³³ Álvarez, *Anales Históricos*, p.172; Sotelo Regil, *Campeche en la historia*, p.275; Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, p.289.

³³⁴ Aznar Barbachano and Carbó, *Memoria*, p.37.

mid-March to Local Congress that they would now only obey when the *Acta Constitutiva* was sworn in its entirety, and they made no mention of their previous Spanish hatred.³³⁵ The anti-Spanish *pronunciamiento* had thus quickly evolved into a patriotic Mexican movement due to changing external circumstances, and the need to have a valid national cause. Without a national *pronunciamiento* or ideology to refer to, the Campecheans realised that their blatantly local and specific demands were not applicable in the standard Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* practice and rhetoric which had been developing since 1821; one faction outrightly attacking others was not good *pronunciamiento* manners. They also reinforced their change of demands by modifying their anti-Spanish rhetoric of earlier, with the *ayuntamiento* communicating that “No es el odio [...] a los europeos, ni el deseo de aprovecharse de sus destinos, lo que motivó aquellos acontecimientos [...] [pero] aquel amor sagrado y zeloso de la independencia, y libertad.”³³⁶

To strengthen the legitimacy of their movement, they also began consciously declaring that their *pronunciamiento* was only motivated out of a noble obligation to save the Yucatecan people from an administration which was untrustworthy and inept. In their words:

Cuando los gobiernos no previenen los acaecimientos que pueden traer algún desorden lamentable, los pueblos están exentos de toda responsabilidad, y si éstos hacen lo que aquéllos debieron practicar en bien de su tranquilidad y libertad, no hacen otra cosa que declarar de hecho la ineptitud de sus gobernantes [...] al súbdito no le compete más que el derecho de petición.³³⁷

This claim was quickly reinforced by the military *pronunciados*, who claimed (similar to the military *pronunciados* of 1823) that it had been “el espíritu de patriotismo, noble alma de esta población ilustrada” which had moved them to pronounce on 15 February, and that they had no choice but to protect the people and to exercise “el derecho de petición que gozan todos

³³⁵ *Campeche sobre revolución*, AGN, Gobernación, Sin Sección, Caja 73, Exp.4, 27 May 1824; Molina Solís, *Historia de Yucatán*, pp.23-24.

³³⁶ *Representación hecha por los comisionados del respetable ayuntamiento de Campeche al honorable poder ejecutivo y la determinación que les recayó*, CAIHY, Impresos, III.1823.002, Mérida, 8 March 1824.

³³⁷ *Ibid.*

los pueblos de la tierra.”³³⁸ Just as *pronunciados* had claimed in the previous year, these *pronunciados* declared that they were intervening to save the region from unjust and unreliable governing authorities. Once more, one should note that it was not a clear-cut instance of the military saving the *patria* from inefficient governance, but of officers and civilians with clear political demands and protestations against the authorities.

The convenient change to this martyr-like attitude in order to legitimise the *pronunciados*’ movement was quickly recognised by the Camarilla. In a letter to the Secretary of State, Francisco Bates harshly condemned this sudden Campechean patriotism, declaring:

conociendo por ellas que el soberano congreso y el S.P.E. no aprobarían su conducta, en todo conforme con la del general Lobato y otros revoltosos, pretendieron variar sus peticiones, queriendo persuadir que todos sus deseos estaban reducidos a que se uniese este estado al resto de la nación.³³⁹

An anonymous and very popular circular was also published in Mérida, criticising the “puñado de hombres” who had the audacity to call themselves the “pueblo.”³⁴⁰ There was now an official standoff.³⁴¹

The confrontation provoked by the *pronunciamiento* would soon be converted into preparations for civil war. It had not taken long for a *pronunciamiento* to pave the way for violence in the peninsula (as shall be discovered, this would be developed even further into the 1830s, as *pronunciamientos* would be used then to not only provoke violence, but to justify it). In mid-March 1824, as ordered by the local government, 2,000 forces (named the Columna volante de la Unión), commanded by *comandante general* José Segundo Carvajal,

³³⁸ Comandante de milicianos Sebastián López de Llergo, Comandante de la división tercero no 8º José María de Ibarra, Sargento mayor fusilero José María de Aguilar, Eduardo Vadillo, José Antonio López de Estrada, José Mariano Rodríguez, Ignacio de la Roca, *Documento de las autoridades de Campeche al augusto congreso. Dan explicación de algunos actos realizados en Campeche*, CAIHY, Cartas, XVIII.1824.2/3.004, 2 March 1824.

³³⁹ Letter by Francisco Bates to the *Sr. Secretario del estado y del despacho de relaciones*, 9 April 1824.

³⁴⁰ El Federalista, *Opúsculo sobre las calamidades que afligen al estado de Yucatán, ó sea reseña de la conducta pública de su gobernador* (Mérida, Yucatán: Reimpreso por Lorenzo Seguí, en la oficina del Sol, 1826) BL, *Papeles Varios* No.5, Doc.16.

³⁴¹ Molina Solís, *Historia de Yucatán*, p.24.

marched to Campeche.³⁴² The local government announced that they were not marching to “hostilizarlos”, but to protect the rights which had been so openly abused by the *pronunciados*³⁴³ (even though the officers of the Columna had orders to imprison, judge and punish the *pronunciados*).³⁴⁴ The response of the *ayuntamiento* of Campeche on 13 March was to announce the suspension of all official relations with Local Congress until the Columna was withdrawn and there was the complete implementation of the *Acta Constitutiva*.³⁴⁵ The *camarilleros*, as always, found a solution to suit their own needs; on 25 March, Congress swore the *Acta* in its entirety, but stated that it would continue “tolerando el tráfico mercantil [de Cuba], no obstante, de hecho y por solo el tiempo necesario.”³⁴⁶

From March to May 1824, the Columna remained in the Campechean barrio of Santa Ana.³⁴⁷ The Campechean garrison was too strongly manned and armed for the Meridian forces to prevail; while the Meridian troops camped in Santa Ana, in the city itself the annual carnival proceeded without interruption throughout March, with festivities nightly. Even after the carnival ended, there was mere pretense at battle, as in the words of historian Bernardino Mena Brito, “permanecieron los dos enemigos sin atacarse; hasta que, después de mucho pensarlo [...] empezaron a hacerse gestos, a disparar tiros al aire y blandir sus machetes a un kilómetro de distancia: pero sin matar ni herir a nadie.”³⁴⁸ The fruitless attempts at shooting made by the Meridian troops were given the name of *bala fría* by the Campecheans, to the point where the humiliation became a popular song: “En la plaza de Santa Ana// Bajo un gran

³⁴² Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, pp.290-292; *Acuerdos de la Junta Gubernativa Provisional: 1823-1824*, CAIHY.

³⁴³ Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, p.290.

³⁴⁴ Álvarez, *Anales Históricos*, p.173.

³⁴⁵ Molina Solís, *Historia de Yucatán*, p.26; Aznar Barbachano and Carbó, *Memoria*, p.37; Lanz, *Compendio de historia*, p.232; Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, p.291.

³⁴⁶ Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, p.291; Carlos R. Menéndez, *La huella del general don Antonio López de Santa Anna en Yucatán* (Mérida, Yucatán: Compañía Tipográfica Yucateca), p.26.

³⁴⁷ Among the *jefes* of the Columna were *camarilleros* Benito Aznar, Sebastián López de Llergo, Ignacio Rubio, Felipe de la Cámara, Pedro Marcial Guerra, Julián Quijano, Leandro Poblaciones, José María Lavalle and Perfecto Sainz de Baranda. See Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, p.291; Serapio Baqueiro, *Ensayo histórico*, p.66.

³⁴⁸ Mena Brito, *Reestructuración Histórica de Yucatán*, p.32.

ramonal// Se encontraba cierto día// Una hermosa pava real// Que en su cantito decía://
Agacha, Carvajal// Que viene la bala fría.”³⁴⁹

When young liberal lawyer and *sanjuanista* Francisco Antonio Tarrazo became governor of Yucatán on 23 April,³⁵⁰ he immediately gave instructions for the withdrawal of the Columna, and with it the hopeful consequent reestablishment of relations with the *ayuntamiento* of Campeche.³⁵¹ Following the withdrawal of the Columna, the Campechean *ayuntamiento* declared that to guarantee the full reestablishment of relations with Local Congress, the *camarilleros* had to fulfil three basic conditions: the declaration of war on Spain, the “exacta y escrupulosa” observation of the *Acta Constitutiva* and obedience to all decrees issued by the national government, and finally amnesty to all the *pronunciados* of 15 February.³⁵² The Meridians refused to listen to the demands of the Campecheans, and it was only after Antonio López de Santa Anna was appointed as commander general of Yucatán on 28 March that he resolved the situation. On 1 May he arrived in Yucatán,³⁵³ and took his time about getting the job done, dallying in both Campeche and Mérida, while Alamán sent a further communication on 27 May to Governor Tarrazo insisting on “el obedecimiento exacto de las órdenes dictadas por S.A.S. acerca de la guerra contra España y prohibición absoluta de comercio con la Península y los países que aun existen bajo su dominación,” declaring that “será muy extraño que hubiese en una misma nación algunos de sus miembros en guerra y

³⁴⁹ Álvarez, *Anales Históricos*, p.173.

³⁵⁰ Baranda, *Recordaciones*, p.141.

³⁵¹ Molina Solís, *Historia de Yucatán*, p.30.

³⁵² Ignacio Roca, José Ignacio Sarricolea, Felipe Antonio Molina, Joaquín del Puerto, José López Gil, Julián Romero, Joaquín Sánchez, José de la Luz Solís, Joaquín Calixto Gil, Miguel Casares, José Mauricio Rodríguez secretario, *Informe que sobre las ocurrencias de esta ciudad ha dado al gobierno del estado el respetable ayuntamiento de esta ciudad, a virtud de orden que al efecto le dirigió de oficio con fecha 1o de mayo último, el exmo. Sr. Gobernador de el, c. Francisco Antonio Tarrazo*, Campeche, 28 May 1824, in *El Sol*, 24 December 1824.

³⁵³ M.F.C. *Diario de las ocurrencias desde la salida de Alvarado hasta la llegada a esta estado del general Santa Anna*, Campeche, 19 May 1824 in *El Sol*, 17 June 1824.

otros en paz y comunicación con una potencia enemiga de la independencia y libertad de todos.”³⁵⁴

Santa Anna hesitated about implementing the end of relations with Cuba, sympathising with the Meridian cause, and even agreeing with a report written by the special Meridian commission on the matter , which stated on 23 June that:

siendo la Isla de Cuba el único mercado en que hallan salida las cortas y pobres producciones de Yucatán [...] antes de dar este paso tan peligroso, debe proveerse a su subsistencia por otro medio seguro. La interrupción de aquel comercio por pocos meses a fines del año de 1822 y principios del de 1823, inundó de miserias y desgracias a este infeliz Estado.³⁵⁵

On 30 June, Santa Anna himself wrote to the national administration that he had been persuaded by the Meridian authorities to postpone the implementation of the declaration of war on Spain, declaring that:

Si ahora con la publicación de la guerra se le estanca el comercio, y de otro lado no se le socorre, es destruirlo [...] no será extraño [...] que Yucatán, miserable y viéndose desatendido, trate de segregarse de la Federación, constituyéndose en Estado separado por sí mismo, o arrojarse en el seno de otra Nación que lo proteja.³⁵⁶

He also compared Yucatán to a “bomba arrojada del mortero próximo a reventar” associating the declaration of war against Spain to:

la caja de Pandora, que lanza males abriéndose [...] Los meridanos, aunque quisieron dar exacto cumplimiento a las órdenes del gobierno supremo de la federación, se abstienen de publicarla, porque privado su comercio con la isla de Cuba, resultaría casi una total carencia de sus fondos par ayudar a sostener el Estado.³⁵⁷

He subsequently demanded that the national administration send 100,000 pesos annually to the region, if Yucatecans were to implement the decree of war.³⁵⁸

With his adherence to their cause, Local Congress named Santa Anna as governor on 20 July 1824.³⁵⁹ He then restored the Spanish authorities who had been deposed by the

³⁵⁴ Menéndez, *La huella*, p.35.

³⁵⁵ “Congreso Constituyente del estado, sesión del 23 de junio de 1824”, in *Gaceta de Mérida de Yucatán*, 29 June 1824.

³⁵⁶ Baqueiro, *Ensayo Histórico*, pp.256-258.

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

³⁵⁸ Ibid., pp.261- 265.

pronunciados of 15 February, and dismissed the *pronunciados* who had been involved.³⁶⁰ National Congress on 9 October nevertheless firmly ordered Santa Anna to stop stalling on the implementation of decree of war on Spain, which he was finally forced to enforce on 16 November 1824 in the peninsula. On the 21 of the same month, he presided over the swearing of the constitution of the federal republic.³⁶¹ He resigned as governor on 25 April 1825, two days after the liberal constitution of Yucatán was sworn.³⁶²

The Campecheans had now three times demonstrated their loyalty to Mexico, while the Meridians on the other hand had shown their tendency towards regionalism and even secession. The established and standard vehicle to manifest both of these differing ideological tendencies was the *pronunciamiento*, with the military beginning to play the increasingly important role of carrying out the exercise, and of resolving the differences which arose from it; indeed, on this occasion, the *pronunciamiento* had given way to potential civil war. There is no doubt that while Yucatecan *pronunciamientos* were still embroiled in Mexican politics and undeniably linked to national *pronunciamientos*, the local agenda in their *pronunciamientos* was beginning to play an increasingly larger role, with regional factions now using it in inter-state rivalry. This novel form of the exercise as a local instrument to express political dissent and achieve local political objectives – especially by the military – would be expressed at its most extreme level yet in the next *pronunciamiento* to come. Once more, local differences among political groups and differing attitudes towards Mexico would prevail in the *pronunciamiento*. These elements, together with the complete dominance of the military in the practice, would be demonstrated in one of the most conspicuous and mystifying *pronunciamientos* of nineteenth-century Yucatán: the 1829 centralist and military-directed *pronunciamiento* of Campeche.

³⁵⁹ Fowler, *Santa Anna*, p.84.

³⁶⁰ Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, pp.299-300; Baranda, *Recordaciones*, p.146.

³⁶¹ *Gaceta de Mérida de Yucatán*, 3 December 1824.

³⁶² Fowler, *Santa Anna*, p.86.

**Centralism, Secession, the Military, and the beginning of the
*crisis de legitimidad: The Pronunciamiento of 1829*³⁶³**

no hay defección cuando no hay legitimidad
ni constitucionalidad en el gobierno;
un gobierno de hecho no es más legítimo
que otro provisorio para conocer
la voluntad legal de la Nación.³⁶⁴

The Campechean-issued *pronunciamiento* of 1829 was one of the milestones of this practice in nineteenth-century Yucatán for several reasons. It was primarily a climax of the *pronunciamiento* trend which had been developing throughout the early 1820s, in particular with regard to its evolution as a national as well as local practice, and also in reference to the growing power of the military in the exercise. The belief in the *pronunciamiento* as a regional practice to negotiate with and hopefully intimidate national administrations now peaked, as the *pronunciados* of 1829 would call for centralism, threatening Yucatecan secession if the national administration did not attend to their demands. The stipulation of centralism seems odd in the Yucatecan case, as it was historically a very regionalist, federalist, and even separatist state, but as will be discovered, the separatist faction of the Camarilla would hijack this *pronunciamiento* in order to bring about their covert plans for Yucatecan secession. Additionally, this *pronunciamiento* would be the first to combine national demands with very local political desires: for the first time in Yucatecan history, *pronunciados* did not use the practice simply as part of a national force to negotiate for Mexican political change (1821 and 1823) or to call for the respect to Mexican law (1824). Instead, they would proclaim the overthrow of the *sanjuanista*-turned-Liga radical liberal party (which had won the 1826

³⁶³ The term “crisis de legitimidad” has been taken from Brian Connaughton, Carlos Illades and Sonia Pérez Toledo, see: Connaughton, Illades and Toledo (eds.), *Construcción de la legitimidad política*, (México: El Colegio de Michoacán, Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México: Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, El Colegio de México, 1999).

³⁶⁴ José Segundo Carvajal, *Manifiesto del jefe superior de Yucatán a los pueblos de esta península* (Mérida, Yucatán: Imprenta de Lorenzo Seguí, 29 June 1831), Biblioteca Nacional, Colección Lafragua 892, p.11.

elections), and would demand that the elite Camarilla party (which was also liberal, but moderate) rule instead. This highlights the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento*'s increasingly *local* importance in the context of, and utilisation in, the struggle between political factions for regional political power. This *pronunciamiento* would thus signify a significant evolution of the practice, as it developed a dual purpose: while the *pronunciados* would attempt to negotiate with the Mexican administration, on the local level it was a different matter. Indeed, this was the first *pronunciamiento* to simultaneously overthrow the Yucatecan governing administration and at the same time realize negotiation efforts with the national authorities. Finally, this exercise would exemplify the utmost importance of the military in not only leading and ensuring the success of the *pronunciamiento*, but also in mixing in politics as they took over the state government. In all these senses, the *pronunciamiento* of 1829 was nothing short of remarkable in the context of the evolution of the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento*.

The Campechean-based *pronunciamiento* of 1829 was the first Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* to lobby for national political change while simultaneously being employed to depose a local government. *Pronunciados* had never previously used the practice to overthrow Yucatán administrations; this was a novelty. Why and how, then, did this idea for using the *pronunciamiento* to overthrow a leader come about? The answer lies in Mexican national politics, and demonstrates the enduring influence which Mexican political practices were having on those of Yucatán. In this case, the Yucatecans copied the aim of a national *pronunciamiento*, and applied it to local circumstances in order to achieve much more immediate and specific objectives.

The events surrounding the Mexican presidential elections of 1828 were the inspiration for the novel duality of the 1829 Yucatecan *pronunciamiento*. A brief summary of the events in Mexico will suffice in order to highlight the significance which it held for future

Yucatecan *pronunciados*. In 1828, the two main candidates for the Mexican presidency were moderate liberal Manuel Gómez Pedraza and radical liberal Vicente Guerrero. Guerrero was the champion of the *yorkino* masonic lodge, a lodge dedicated to federalism, constituted in large part of supporters of anti-Hispanic sentiment. On the other hand, a more moderate sector of *yorkinos* (who did not approve of the extremism of their fellow masons) supported Gómez Pedraza. All expected that Guerrero, the war hero of independence, would win the election. When electoral authorities announced that Gómez Pedraza had instead won by a close margin, Guerrero's supporters manifested their fury; in Veracruz, General Santa Anna issued the *Plan de Perote* on 16 September 1828, demanding that Guerrero be made president (regardless of the constitutional results). In Mexico City, the *yorkinos* of the barracks of La Acordada then revolted on 30 November, causing scenes of violence and disorder on the streets, including an attack on the national Palace by the masses. The violence which escalated into the Parián Riot of 4 and 5 December 1828 provoked the resignation of Gómez Pedraza, with Guerrero assuming the presidency on 1 April 1829.³⁶⁵ In Fowler's words, "the rebellion was more similar to a coup than a *pronunciamiento*" as there was no attempt at negotiation, and no list of demands were made.

The *pronunciamiento* and uprising of 1828 was a watershed in Mexican politics. It demonstrated to the rest of the nation (and Yucatecans in this context) the complete violation of the constitutional system through the efforts of a *pronunciamiento* (the Plan of Perote) combined with military force (*La Acordada*). *Pronunciados* could now evidently use the practice to target not only political systems, but individuals and administrations as well; the legitimacy and force of "public opinion" had overthrown a constitutionally elected president. Additionally, it seemed that *pronunciados* could employ military force and violence as a necessary tool to ensure that administrations obeyed the so-called *voluntad del pueblo*;

³⁶⁵ <http://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/pronunciamientos/database/index.php?f=y&id=1609&m=12&y=1828>; Fowler, *Mexico in the Age*, p.20.

indeed, *pronunciados* had converted the “derecho de petición” of the early 1820s into the “derecho de insurrección.”³⁶⁶ Mexican respect for constitutionality had thus disappeared in the wake of the government’s obligated obedience to the voices of “the people”, in this case, the military. When Congress accepted Guerrero as president, it sealed the practice of the *pronunciamiento* – and the military violence which it led to – as the accepted and legitimate avenue to overthrow a governing administrative body.

The *pronunciamiento* as nothing more than a legitimate coup (with Mexicans blaming the constitutional system itself for being flawed as it had denied Guerrero the presidency) would be henceforth applied to local events in Yucatán; the Yucatecan political and military elite had closely observed the events in 1828 in Mexico City, only to consciously apply them to their own circumstances. Indeed, given that national *pronunciamientos* encouraged imitation by soliciting the *acta de adhesión*, it is not strange that the practice spread so widely and so quickly, with *pronunciados* adopting it to suit local political demands. In the peninsula, there had been a struggle for state political power since 1825, which would be part of the inspiration for the first locally-targeted *pronunciamiento* of 1829.

As of 1825, two main Yucatecan political parties were in existence: the same Camarilla (headed by captain of the First Active Battalion and merchant Pedro Marcial Guerra, along with businessmen Pedro Manuel de Regil, and Pedro José Guzmán), and their newfound opposition, the Liga. The Liga had been established at the end of 1824, when the former *patriotas campechanos* decided to unite with the *sanjuanistas*, in opposition to the Camarilla. The main reason for this formation was the discovery of a Camarilla-led conspiracy in November 1824 to secede from Mexico and reunite with Spain (mainly in order to maintain the *camarilleros*’ lucrative trade links with Cuba).³⁶⁷ Indeed, the *camarilleros* had

³⁶⁶ See Catherine Andrews, *Entre la espada y la constitución: el general Anastasio Bustamante, 1780-1853*, (Tamaulipas, México: Universidad Autónoma de Tamaulipas: H. Congreso del Estado de Tamaulipas, LX Legislatura, 2008).

³⁶⁷ Menéndez, *La huella del general*, p.245.

planned a *pronunciamiento* for 2 December, to “separar este estado del general de la federación.”³⁶⁸ Even though the plan was unsuccessful, the Liga formed anyway, claiming its purpose was to maintain the federation and Yucatán’s loyalty to Mexico, and prevent the Camarilla’s projects to “preparar la desunión” from Mexico.”³⁶⁹ Made up primarily of young bourgeoisie members and businessmen and led by merchant José Tiburcio López, the Liga included among its most important members political figures Juan de Dios Cosgaya, Manuel Crescencio Rejón, José Matías Quintana, liberal clergy such as José María Meneses, and elite military individuals Pedro Landero, Pablo Antonio Lenard, Miguel Duque de Estrada, Joaquín Casares y Armas and Francisco Genaro de Cicero.³⁷⁰

The struggle between the Liga and the Camarilla soon became embroiled in and evolved under the burgeoning Masonic lodges in Yucatán and Mexico. The *ligados* were primarily members of the liberal and pro-federalist *yorkino* lodge, and in late 1825, the *camarilleros* claimed their adhesion to the *escocés* lodge (the primary opposition of the *yorkinos*), which generally had a tendency towards centralism, with pro-Hispanic sentiments.³⁷¹ Both lodges were basically in accordance with the Yucatecan political factions; the *escoceses* and *camarilleros* were the more traditionalist elite sectors of society, while the *yorkinos* and *ligados*, having a mix of higher and middle classes, were more popular. The only main difference was that the *camarilleros* were obviously highly regionalist – with some of them even possessing separatist desires – rather than being centralist. Indeed, they had declared Yucatán’s secession from Mexico in 1823 in their efforts to establish a national federal system, and they had also refused to implement the Mexican declaration of war on

³⁶⁸ *La camarilla y la liga. Copia de un informe del general Pedro Lemus, juez en la causa criminal seguido contra unos presuntos reos de conspiración para separar el Estado de la federación, denunciados por el capitán Leandro Poblaciones*, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Milicia, Vol.4, Exp.6, Mérida, 2 October 1826.

³⁶⁹ Menéndez, *La huella del general*, p.233; ‘Los Yucatecos’, *Compendio Histórico*, pp.26; 29-32.

³⁷⁰ *El Cosmopolita: Periódico misceláneo de Campeche*, 4 October 1826.

³⁷¹ *Sumaria promovida por don Francisco Benítez, alcalde primero de Mérida contra don Ignacio Quijano, el capitán don Martín Peraza y otros connotados vecinos, por perturbadores del orden público y demuestran sus simpatías por la Camarilla*, AGEY, Justicia, Justicia Penal, Vol.3, Exp.33, 15 and 17 December 1825; Zavala, *Ensayo Histórico*, p.258.

Spain in 1824, consequently plotting for separation from Mexico. There was thus a clear contradiction in calling themselves *escoceses*. Nevertheless, apparently it was possible to claim to belong to the national pro-Hispanic and centralist ideology of the *escoceses*, but regionally, the *camarilleros* could completely adapt that centralist ideology to become a regionalist and even separatist ideology in Yucatán. The claim of their adhesion to the *escocés* lodge was to give them ideological legitimacy and thus increase their supporters;³⁷² by 1826, some of the most influential military figures such as Lieutenants of the First Active Battalion Domingo Cantón and Ignacio Quijano (who was also an important merchant), Lieutenant of the Thirteenth Permanent Battalion Martín Francisco Peraza,³⁷³ Coronel of the First Active Battalion Benito Aznar (who was also an *hacendado* of a henequen plantation),³⁷⁴ Captain of the First Active Battalion Pedro Cámara, and Commander of the First Active Battalion Felipe de la Cámara (who was also an *hacendado* of henequen),³⁷⁵ all identified themselves as *camarilleros*.³⁷⁶

In 1825, the Liga triumphed in elections with José Tiburcio López becoming governor on 21 August, defeating *camarillero* candidate and Campechean businessmen Pedro Manuel de Regil.³⁷⁷ For the first time since 1821, the Camarilla had lost their political dominance over the peninsula. They did not hesitate to display their anger. Supported in particular by the First Active Battalion, several “conmociones populares” were held by the *camarilleros* throughout December 1825, leading to the government’s unsuccessful order of the arrest of their head Pedro José Guzmán.³⁷⁸ Guzmán then denounced that his detainment would only serve to leave “el campo libre” for “esa ominosa clase de *sanjuanistas*” while

³⁷² Campos García, *De provincia*, p.148.

³⁷³ *Sumaria promovida* [...], 15 and 17 December 1825; Letter from Governor López to the Minister of Relations, AGN, Gobernación, Sin Sección, Caja 8, Mérida, 17 January 1826.

³⁷⁴ Zanolli Fabila, “Liberalismo y orígenes del federalismo”, p.409.

³⁷⁵ Cline, “Regionalism and Society”, p.133.

³⁷⁶ *Sumaria promovida* [...], 15 and 17 December 1825; Letter from Governor López to the Minister of Relations, AGN, Gobernación, Sin Sección, Caja 8, Mérida, 17 January 1826.

³⁷⁷ Molina Solís, *Historia de Yucatán*, p.71.

³⁷⁸ Letters from José Tiburcio López to Ignacio Mora, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Libro Complementario 4, *Correspondencia de los gobernadores 1825-1829*, 26 June 1825, 31 September 1825, 1 January 1826.

calling for the expulsion of López.³⁷⁹ After the triumph of the Liga in the *ayuntamiento* elections in January 1826, the *camarilleros* revolted once more, claiming that the Liga government had converted itself into a tyrannical institution from which one could now only free oneself through an armed uprising. The attacks on the *ligados* began; on 17 May there was an assassination attempt on *ligado* Manuel Crescenio Rejón, (with two assassins disguised as women asking for a private meeting with him),³⁸⁰ and subsequently military *camarilleros* cut off *ligado* publisher Manuel Anguas' ear in an unsuccessful attempt to behead him.³⁸¹

The plot to attain local power through the *pronunciamiento* of 1829 would not solely reside in *camarillero* intentions, but also in a new faction on the rise: the centralist party. In late 1826 in Mexico, the *yorkinos* had begun calling for expulsion laws of the Spaniards; indeed, hungry to obtain government posts for their members (posts which some Spaniards occupied), the *yorkinos* saw this measure as the easiest solution.³⁸² On 19 January 1827, after the discovery of the plan of Father Joaquín Arenas to re-establish Spanish rule, the *yorkino* hatred towards the Spaniards significantly increased, and they drafted expulsion laws on 10 May and 20 December 1827, which the radical National Congress in power approved.³⁸³ In Yucatán, the *escocés-camarillero* faction immediately began protesting against these laws, proclaiming that the *yorkinos* were attempting to “conmover a los pueblos contra los españoles y rebajar los vínculos federales.”³⁸⁴ However, Liga and *yorkino* member Governor López was a Meridian businessman who was harbouring hopes of re-establishing relations with Cuba (not Spanish domination like the *camarilleros* desired, as must be noted). In order

³⁷⁹ Campos García, “La política yucateca”, p.324.

³⁸⁰ Letter from José Tiburcio López to Ignacio Mora, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Libro Complementario 4, *Correspondencia de los gobernadores 1825-1829*, 18 May 1826.

³⁸¹ José Tiburcio López, *El gobernador del estado de Yucatán quejándose de las que se han experimentado allí por causa del comandante general de las armas, d. Ignacio Mora*, AGN, Gobernación, Sin Sección, Caja 6, August 1826.

³⁸² Fowler, *Santa Anna*, p.97.

³⁸³ Fowler, *Mexico in the Age*, p.19.

³⁸⁴ Carlos A. Echánove Trujillo, *La vida pasional e inquieta de don Manuel Crescencio Rejón* (México: Sociedad Mexicana de Geografía y Estadística, 1941), p.97.

to keep favour with the Spaniards still resident in Yucatán, (and perhaps with Spain in general), he thus stalled on implementing the expulsion laws throughout the entire year of 1828. Moreover, he had openly condemned the plan of *duranguense* José María González of 10 March 1827 which had also called for the expulsion of the Spaniards.³⁸⁵

It was this moderate attitude of López and his administration towards the anti-Spanish laws which caused the fissure in the Liga coalition of the *sanjuanistas* and the *patriotas campechanos*, ultimately giving rise to the centralist party. One should recall that the *patriotas campechanos* were a die-hard anti-Spanish faction, who had pronounced in 1824 to ensure the Meridian implementation of the end of trade with Cuba, and to dismiss the Spaniards from their posts in Yucatán. Once more, the old Campechean-Meridian rivalry came to the fore, with Meridian impartiality towards decrees against Spain (*ligados*) and reunification plans to Cuba (*camarilleros*) clashing with Campechean pro-Mexican and anti-Spanish sentiment (*patriotas campechanos*). On 19 January 1828, the *patriotas* began to demand that López impose the laws of the expulsion of the Spaniards, pressuring him throughout the year to obey Mexican legislature, but he did not implement it until December of that year.³⁸⁶ The Meridian reluctance to act against the Spaniards disgusted *patriota* leader Francisco Genaro de Cicero, who, together with followers such as Joaquín Casares y Armas, Miguel Duque de Estrada, and Tomás Requeña, broke off from the Liga.³⁸⁷ They formed the *cicerista* party, which would soon become known as the centralist party in Yucatán, a faction opposed to the disobedience and individuality of the Meridian-dominated Yucatecan administrations. This faction had a clear centralist ideology, concerned with the creation of a stronger central Mexican government which would have greater control over the recalcitrant

³⁸⁵ *Libro copiadador de la correspondencia reservada de los gobernadores, con la Secretaria de Estado y sus despachos, y algunas otras autoridades. De 12 de febrero de 1827 a 30 de octubre de 1829, y de junio a 16 de octubre de 1837*, CAIHY.

³⁸⁶ *La Bandera de Anáhuac*, 19 January 1828; Harold Sims, *Descolonización en México. El conflicto entre mexicanos y españoles (1821-1831)* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1982), pp.46-47; 99.

³⁸⁷ Campos García, "La política yucateca", p.369.

Meridians. They would be responsible for spreading the idea of using the *pronunciamiento* to obtain local power in 1829 in order to ensure obedience to Mexico. One should note that they were using centralism not to serve a national purpose, but to accomplish local objectives which were remarkably similar to those of the 1824 Campechean *pronunciamiento*. They were thus using a national ideal as a local weapon against the elite Meridians, to force them to descend from their power-trip which they had been enjoying since colonial years, and instead completely obey the national administration.

The centralists began their campaign against the Meridians, declaring that “Campeche nunca reconocerá más que a México, siguiendo en toda la suerte que corra la república”,³⁸⁸ and proclaiming that the Sixth and Thirteenth Permanent Battalions (which constituted the regular army and obeyed the national executive) stationed in Campeche and which were commanded by Mexicans Juan José Codallos and Francisco de Paula Toro respectively (the latter who would soon head the *pronunciamiento* of 1832 against this very administration) would block any Meridian pro-Spanish plans. The discovery of clandestine correspondence from Havana to the wives of distinguished *camarillero* figures Pedro Escudero de la Rocha and Pedro José Guzmán led the centralist newspaper *La Bandera de Anáhuac* to attack the *camarilleros* throughout 1827, accusing them of planning a secessionist project.³⁸⁹ In their other newspaper, the *Eco de Yucatán*, they also made the ludicrous claim that *ligados* Zavala, Fernando Valle and Manuel Crescencio Rejón were also involved in “el horrible proyecto de separar a Yucatán de la unidad federal” which “no servirá más que para facilitar el engrandecimiento de muy pocas familias de Mérida.”³⁹⁰ With more reason, the centralists accused *camarilleros* Pedro José Guzmán and Felipe de la Cámara of planning to replace

³⁸⁸ Carta particular, *Eco de Yucatán*, *Contra la conducta política y ministerial del secretario de hacienda d. Lorenzo de Zavala*. Numero 1, 17 July 1829, in *Apología de los hombres de bien* .p.4, British Library, *Papeles Varios* No.6.

³⁸⁹ ‘Los Yucatecos’, *Amigos del pueblo con S.P.*, (Mérida, Yucatán: Oficina de “La Bandera” a cargo del ciudadano C. Anguas, 1827), Biblioteca Nacional, Colección Lafragua 492.

³⁹⁰ *Eco de Yucatán*, 17 July 1829.

Commander General Felipe Codallos with *camarillero* José Segundo Carvajal (who was then the commander of arms in Campeche). The centralists also warned the *ligados* that Yucatán “jamás será asilo de los delincuentes de la Acordada,”³⁹¹ as they stated that because of those tumultuous events of 1828, the *yorkinos* had reawakened “los deseos del bárbaro y cruel Fernando, que nunca hubiera pensado atacarnos, si no hubieran suscitado la Discordia, los Poinsetts, los Zavalas y otros monstruos de esta especie.”³⁹² They blamed the radicalism of the federal system for creating an unstable republic, vulnerable to invasion, and they declared that a centralist government was necessary in order to ensure public order, respect for the constitution, and the survival of independence.

³⁹¹ Ibid.

³⁹² Ibid., 21 July 1829.

Permanent forces, Active Battalions and Civic Militias in 1827	
Company	Number of Men
Sixth Permanent Battalion	677
The Thirteenth Permanent Battalion	846
First Active Battalion (Mérida)	1228
Second Active Battalion (Campeche)	1182
Third Active Battalion (Tizimín)	1107
Coastguards	166
Infantry of Bacalar	132
Infantry of Carmen	63
Veterans and actives of Artillery	244
Cavalry, Mérida	108
Cavalry, Carmen	67
Total	5820

Source: Campos García, *De provincia*, p.149

Moreover, the centralists (and the majority of the Mexican elite in general) did not approve of the presidential figure: Guerrero's lower class, mixed race, and unimpressive education contrasted heavily with the usual elite Caucasian political class of the *hombres de bien*. In addition, the extremism of the Minister of Finance Zavala – who had decreed a series of taxes on the upper classes in order to raise money for the treasury – led to further elite disapproval.³⁹³ Additionally, the more conservative Yucatecans viewed Zavala's radical *sanjuanista* legacy unfavourably. The administration had also begun to take initiatives which threatened the power of the Church, alarming the more traditionalist factions and the clergy.³⁹⁴ Nationwide opposition to the Guerrero administration and its radicalism was

³⁹³ Ibid., 24 July and 11, 14 August 1829.

³⁹⁴ As Minister of Finance, Zavala had ordered the auctioning of goods and property owned by the Jesuits, along with a forced loan from the cathedral chapter. See Michael Costeloe, *La primera república Federal de México (1824-1835): un estudio de los partidos políticos en el México independiente* (México: Fondo de Cultura

consequently becoming manifest. The Yucatecan centralists now needed the right elements to dispose of the Liga, and to contribute to the end of Guerrero and federalism. As Yucatecan federalist Fernando Valle claimed, “Casares, a Requeña y a otros [...] querían centralizar, porque éstos les habían asegurado que en México se trataba de ello y de derribar al Sr. Guerrero.”³⁹⁵ The early 1820s had demonstrated that the *pronunciamiento* could be used for a change of a constitutional system and the implementation of national decrees; 1828 now proved that *pronunciados* could use the practice to overthrow administrations and leading political figures. Nevertheless, experience had also shown that a successful Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* had to have two key elements to ensure a chance at success: a national cause to adhere to (and thus give the movement some sort of ideological legitimacy and strength), and the support of the army, as force needed to be employed where consent was not.

The courting of the locally-stationed army was therefore a priority for the centralists. The timing was right; the permanent army was discontented with the national and local administrations for purely financial reasons. Since 1826, there had been a constant feud between Governor López and then Commander General Felipe Codallos concerning the lack of funds and supplies for the some 1500 permanent troops stationed in Yucatán. Although it was the national treasury’s responsibility to pay these salaries, the scarcity of national funds led to Codallos’ demand that it was the obligation of the local government to supplement the resources needed. López took several measures to make funds available to the troops throughout 1828 and 1829, through donations and readjustments to the local treasury, but Codallos was still dissatisfied.³⁹⁶ In July 1829, news came of the arrival of Spanish Brigadier General Isidro Barradas and his 3,000 strong troops in Tampico, with plans of the reconquest

Económica, 1975), p.235; Alfredo Ávila, "La presidencia de Vicente Guerrero," in Will Fowler (ed.), *Gobernantes mexicanos* Volume 1, 1821-1910 (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2008), p. 92.

³⁹⁵Ibid., 23 July 1829.

³⁹⁶José Tiburcio López, “Informe del gobernador López” in *Libro de Sesiones del Quinto Congreso Constitucional de Yucatán*, CAIHY, Manuscritos, 21 August 1829.

of Mexico.³⁹⁷ With the national emergency, Codallos increased his demands for more money, as he put into force two battalions to defend the state; battalions which the national or local government had no money to fund.³⁹⁸

López did not advance any more money to Codallos, and instead invested it in the training and equipping of the civic militias (which were more under-armed and under-trained than the permanent and active battalions), providing them with more than 5,000 arms, and claiming that they were also necessary to repel the Spanish invasion.³⁹⁹ With López's refusal of funds, Codallos accused the governor of harbouring sympathies for the Spaniards (an accusation similar to the centralists' criticism), claiming that López had a "plan para que a pretexto de defender el pacto se dé lugar a que se destruya no ya la forma de gobierno, sino la independencia misma."⁴⁰⁰ Codallos threatened that he would limit the defence of Yucatán to Campeche, declaring that his troops would resort to "desorden" if the government did not pay their salaries. The governor responded that if the troops did revolt, he would find it necessary to declare civil war.⁴⁰¹ The situation soon became so extreme that López requested the dismissal of Codallos, whom he accused on 21 August of attempting to overpower the state authorities, with Codallos' employment terminating in late September, as *camarillero* José Segundo Carvajal replaced him.⁴⁰²

Despite Codallos' dismissal, the damage had been sufficient for the centralist party to take advantage. Throughout 1829, the *ciceristas* had begun to capitalise on army resentment, spreading the rumour among the permanent army that while the soldier did not

³⁹⁷ Lucas Alamán, *Historia de México desde los primeros movimientos que prepararon su independencia en el año de 1808 hasta la época presente* Tomo V, (México City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1985), p.849.

³⁹⁸ Molina Solís, *Historia de Yucatán*, p.83; Campos García, *Que los yucatecos*, p.87.

³⁹⁹ José Tiburcio López, *Milicia cívica de la península de Yucatán*, AGN, Gobernación, Sin Sección, Caja 10, Mérida, 19 June 1829. The civic militias had been created since 1823, and were controlled and funded by the states. Their principal aim was to defend their towns, and they were commanded by the governor. Nevertheless, as of 1827, it was decreed that it was also their responsibility to defend national independence and the federal constitution. See Anna, *Forging*, p.156.

⁴⁰⁰ Campos García, "La política yucateca", p.381.

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰² *Enciclopedia Yucatenense*, p.189.

even have bread to eat, the governor and other civil authorities were swimming in riches. They blamed this situation on the inefficient bureaucracy of the federalist system; it had proved itself useless in maintaining the troops, and therefore what was needed was a change to a centralist regime.⁴⁰³ They also planted the idea (as had been practiced in 1828 in Mexico City), that if negotiation could not achieve this change, military force had to accomplish it. As Vázquez has pointed out, the resentment among the troops was to the point that they were inclined to believe in – and consequently support – whatever political change promised the payment of their salaries.⁴⁰⁴ The military consequently welcomed the centralist ideas, and began to discuss them in their *tertulias* and juntas. The López administration did not fail to notice this, and criticised them as a threat to the government.⁴⁰⁵ The administration's fears were not unfounded; in early January 1829 Codallos himself had started calling for disobeying the national government as it was “sometido a la facción yorkina.”⁴⁰⁶ The local *yorkinos* then condemned him for plotting to “centralizar el gobierno de la nación.”⁴⁰⁷

The most powerful figures in the military to still be convinced of the centralist cause were the *camarillero* elite, who despite losing political power, still occupied some of the highest military positions in Yucatán, heading the active battalions. The *camarilleros*, with their ideology of a relative level of regional autonomy (based mainly on the need to maintain essential trade links with Cuba) were not – and would never be – true supporters of a strong centralist administration. Nevertheless, at the same time, they were hungry to regain the local political power which they had lost, and they noted the growing popularity of the centralist movement. They were also, as one should recall, the upper-crust of Yucatecan society, and they did not appreciate the radical administration of Guerrero and Zavala. They

⁴⁰³ *El Yucateco Constitucional*, 3 August 1831.

⁴⁰⁴ Vázquez, “Two Reactions”, p.57.

⁴⁰⁵ *El Yucateco Constitucional*, 3 August 1831; Letter from José Tiburcio López to Felipe Codallos, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Libro Complementario 4, *Correspondencia de los gobernadores 1825-1829*, 5 September 1829.

⁴⁰⁶ Campos García, *Que los yucatecos*, p.86.

⁴⁰⁷ Campos García, *De provincia*, p.175.

had witnessed in 1828 that *pronunciados* could legitimately use military force in order to overthrow an unwanted political administration. Once there was the *pronunciamiento* glaze on a text which declared to represent public opinion, along with stating the *pronunciados*' intentions of saving the nation, the majority accepted it. The *camarilleros* thus realised that they could use the centralist ideology and plan as a platform for them to regain political power and consequently carry out the type of government which *they* desired (historically, of a distinctly regional character if 1821 and 1823 were anything to go by). Consequently, as of 1829, *camarillero* military figures – among them Lieutenant Colonel Juan Manuel Calderón (Commander of the Meridian barracks),⁴⁰⁸ Captains of the First Active Battalion Gerónimo López de Llergo and Pedro Marcial Guerra and Second Lieutenant of the Permanent Cavalry Pedro Cantón⁴⁰⁹ – began claiming their adhesion to the centralist movement. As *camarillero* Joaquín Gutiérrez de Estrada rightly remarked, in the coalition participated “una masa de opinión por el federalismo” which had allied to the “partido centralista” in pure opposition to the government of López “y su pandilla.”⁴¹⁰ Lligado Manuel Crescencio Rejón agreed, who saw among the *golpistas* “un gran número” of federalists who had united with the small centralist faction “para satisfacer resentimientos personales y pasiones innobles.”⁴¹¹

Despite the Mexican triumph over the Spanish invasion on 11 September 1829 and the dismissal of Codallos, the military's centralist juntas continued in Yucatán – presided by

⁴⁰⁸ Zanolli Fabila, “Liberalismo y orígenes del federalismo”, p.408.

⁴⁰⁹ *Testimonio de las diligencias indagatorias de la conspiración practicadas por disposición de la Comandancia militar del cuartel de esta capital*, AGN, Gobernación, Sin Sección, Caja 167, Exp.7, 8 October 1833.

⁴¹⁰ Un Yucateco, *Observaciones sobre las iniciativas que han dirigido al Congreso General la honorable legislatura de Querétaro y la comisión permanente de la de Jalisco, relativas a los negocios de Yucatán; y por apéndice, una colección de los opúsculos y artículos que se han publicado sobre este mismo asunto en el presente año*, (Mexico City: Imprenta de Galván, a cargo de Mariano Arévalo, Calle de Cadena No.2, 1831), Biblioteca Nacional, Colección Lafragua 892, p.18.

⁴¹¹ *El Yucateco Constitucional*, 30 July 1831; Zanolli Fabila, “Liberalismo y orígenes del federalismo”, p.409; *La Concordia Yucateca. Periódico liberal de Mérida de Yucatán*, 19 February 1831; *Del ayuntamiento de Campeche al Presidente Vicente Guerrero*, Campeche, AGN, Gobernación, Sin Sección, Caja 829, Exp.3, 7 April 1829.

Commander of Artillery Francisco Javier Verna⁴¹² and Commander General José Segundo Carvajal in Mérida and Campeche respectively – with the main theme being the poverty of the military. Distinguished *camarillero* businessmen Pedro Manuel de Regil, Pedro José Guzmán, Simón Peón, and José María Gutiérrez de Estrada also openly supported the juntas, donating one-third of their incomes to sustain the troops.⁴¹³ These businessmen also had economic interests to protect; in Mérida, the Guzmán family had strong trade relations with New Orleans, while in Campeche, the Regil family and their relatives the Gutiérrez de Estradas sustained prominent trade with Jamaica. In May 1829, National Congress had dealt them a severe blow by declaring the prohibition of the import of foreign textiles. Moreover, on 14 October 1828, Congress had then declared a tax (5 percent) on the import and export of all agricultural and industrial products, and with it, the end of the free trade of cocoa, coffee, silk and wax.⁴¹⁴ Guerrero had also used his extraordinary faculties (granted to him during the Spanish invasion, and which he now refused to give up) to abolish slavery on 16 September 1829,⁴¹⁵ angering the landowning elite *camarilleros*, such as the Peón family. Local government stalled on implementing these taxes, but by November, it was imperative that they be put into practice; November, the same month that the *pronunciamiento* would erupt.⁴¹⁶ No coincidences there.

The coalition which thus formed was made up of centralists, military officers, regionalist *camarilleros*, merchants and plantation owners. It is also interesting to note that the powerful nucleus of *camarilleros* was intimately connected: Carvajal was the son-in-law of the businessman Fernando Gutiérrez and therefore brother-in-law of José María and Joaquín Gutiérrez de Estrada. He was also related to the Escudero de la Rocha family, and was the cousin of Manuel José Peón, Joaquín Castellanos, José Encarnación Cámara and the

⁴¹² *El Sol*, 10 August 1831.

⁴¹³ *El Sol*, 24 July 1829.

⁴¹⁴ Campos García, *Que los yucatecos*, pp.86-87; 90.

⁴¹⁵ Fowler, *Santa Anna*, p.125.

⁴¹⁶ Campos García, *De provincia*, p.183.

brothers Tomás, Benito and Alonso Aznar y Peón. He was the uncle of Sebastián Peón and relative of Pedro Cámara. The Baranda and Cicero families were related in Campeche, and also José Julián Quijano had married into the Escudero family in 1814.⁴¹⁷ Family loyalties thus played their part in the coalition as well.

Rumours of a national *pronunciamiento* in favour of centralism then started swirling throughout Mexico. The *ex-escoceses* (their lodge had been extinguished in 1828) and the more moderate *yorkinos* who had supported Gómez Pedraza's candidacy, began to conspire in the autumn of 1829 against the too-radical Guerrero administration. With rumours of military leaders Anastasio Bustamante and Santa Anna plotting to pronounce for centralism from Jalapa, the pamphlet entitled "¿La república central nos librará de todo mal? Grito de centralismo en Jalapa por el general Santa Anna" was sent from Jalapa to Yucatán, with its contents provoking great excitement among the centralist faction in the peninsula.⁴¹⁸ A national *pronunciamiento* calling for centralism in order to save the nation from the perils of the current administration – and needed by the Yucatecans to "piggy back" on – thus seemed to be really happening. The centralist juntas discussed the rumours with great enthusiasm, with the Liga consequently accusing their opposition of trying to "sobreponerse a los poderes del estado y sujetarlos a sus deliberaciones y acuerdos."⁴¹⁹ The centralist coalition paid no attention to the local administration, and all the Yucatecan centralists had to do now was to wait for the formal announcement of the national *pronunciamiento*.

The Yucatecan military, however, did not wait on Jalapa, but pronounced spontaneously, prematurely, and drunkenly on the night of 5 November (an example of one of the many unwise decisions which alcohol can lead to influencing). In Zavala's words, "El plan había tenido su origen entre los jefes residentes en Jalapa; se había extendido a todos los

⁴¹⁷ Varios Yucatecos, *Impugnación* (México: Publ. unknown, 27 December 1831), Biblioteca Nacional, Colección Lafragua 869, p.49-51; Campos García, *Que los yucatecos*, pp.90-93.

⁴¹⁸ *Eco de Yucatán*, 23 and 28 July 1829.

⁴¹⁹ Letter from José Tiburcio López to Felipe Codallos, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Libro Complementario 4, *Correspondencia de los gobernadores 1825-1829*, 5 September 1829.

militares de la república, y en Campeche estalló antes de la época convenida.”⁴²⁰ On 5 November, Captain Luis Gutiérrez had just entered into service in the Sixth Permanent Battalion. Among the colleagues participating in his celebrations were Commander of Arms of Campeche Ignacio Roca, Commander of the Thirteenth Battalion Francisco Paula de Toro, Commander of the Sixth Battalion Ignacio Castro, Colonel of Artillery Francisco Verna, Commander of Artillery Leandro Poblaciones, and Commander of the Second Active Battalion Sebastián López de Llergo. The conversation at the celebratory meal revolved around the poverty from which the military was suffering, with the disgust against the present local and national administrations growing ever more heated. Spontaneously, Manuel López de Llergo, brother of Sebastián, toasted for the centralist republic, to which drunken shouts of support were immediately given. The troops then congregated in the plaza, giving cries of “¡Viva la República Central Mexicana!” causing a mere gathering of alarmed civilians. They now needed a text to transform this from a drunken brawl into a practice demonstrating the Mexican “derecho de insurrección.” They thus proceeded to the house of Ignacio Roca, where a commission made up of centralists of Cicero, Rafael Traba and José María Contreras drew up the *pronunciamiento* text, which was proclaimed on the following day.⁴²¹

The *Acta del pronunciamiento de la guarnición de Campeche por la forma de gobierno de república central* was the first Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* to be purely issued by the military, signed by the commanders of the Sixth and Thirteenth Battalions, along with officers from the active battalions (illustrating a powerful coalition formed by the active battalions and the regular army).⁴²² In this sense, it clearly imitated the *Plan de Perote* of

⁴²⁰ Zavala, *Ensayo Histórico*, p.158.

⁴²¹ Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, p.320.

⁴²² The principal signatories were Commander of Arms Ignacio de la Roca, Commanders of the Thirteenth Permanent Battalion Francisco de Paula Toro, of Artillery Francisco Javier Verna, of the Sixth Permanent Battalion José Ignacio de Castro, of the Second Active Battalion Sebastián López de Llergo, of Marines Manuel de Lara, of Artillery Leandro de Poblaciones, Colonel Ángel de Toro, Major of the Plaza Félix López Toledo, Acting Major of the Thirteenth Permanent Battalion Bartolomé Arzamendi, Acting Major of the Sixth Permanent Battalion José María Villalvaso, and Acting Major of the Second Active Battalion Rafael de Traba. See: <http://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/pronunciamientos/database/index.php?f=y&id=764&m=11&y=1829>

1828, demonstrating the dominance of the military in the *pronunciamiento* practice. The *pronunciados* demanded a central Mexican government, with the justification of saving the republic from the disorder and threat to social security which the federal system had caused, and which Mexicans had witnessed in *La Acordada* and the Parián riot. In their words, “la independencia y seguridad de la nación, constantemente amenazada por las peligrosas oscilaciones de que ha sido y es combatida bajo el sistema federal” needed to be secured. Federalism was also the cause behind the “desorganización en que se halla el ejército y la hacienda.” The Spanish invasion had moreover proved that a strong central government was the “base esencial para mantener la independencia a toda costa.”⁴²³ The negotiating tactic was the same that had been used in 1823: recognise our demands, or we will secede. Once more, Yucatecans were using their distance from Mexico to their advantage; even though the *pronunciamiento* was military-based, given the isolation of the peninsula from Mexico City, it was not practical to intimidate the national administration using military force. Potential secession would instead be threatened.

The military would use the threat of armed force much closer to home in order to pressure local powers into accepting the *pronunciamiento*. The *pronunciados* demanded in their text the resignation of all local administrative officials, stating that the local congress, senator and governor were now “sin ejercicio [...] porque se halla en contradicción con el sistema del pronunciamiento” and anyone who refused to second the *pronunciamiento* “cesará en el ejercicio de sus funciones.” The act was then sent to *camarillero* Commander General José Segundo Carvajal for approval.⁴²⁴ On 7 November, Carvajal declared to the state authorities that he would use all his resources to resist the *pronunciamiento*, including his own life.⁴²⁵ While the *pronunciados* in Campeche waited impatiently for Carvajal’s response, their anxiety overflowed into talk of simply marching upon Mérida; they were

⁴²³ Ibid.

⁴²⁴ *Eco de Yucatán*, 30 December 1829.

⁴²⁵ *El Yucateco Constitucional*, 10 August 1831.

already considering the use of military power – learnt in 1828 – to enable the *pronunciamiento*’s success.⁴²⁶ Carvajal met with his fellow military *camarilleros* Benito Aznar, Joaquín Muñoz, Juan Manuel Calderón, Néstor Escudero, Gerónimo López de Llergo, and Pedro Marcial Guerra, and they all declared that they were “interesados en cambiar de sistema,” with the exception of Aznar who declared that the mission of the military was to uphold, not demolish the institutions established.⁴²⁷ His comrades disregarded his protests, and Calderón and Llergo then seconded the *pronunciamiento* in the name of the First Active Battalion stationed in Mérida, with the added article that Yucatán *would not wait on any negotiation for centralism, but had already seceded and would not reunite with Mexico until it adopted a centralist system.*⁴²⁸ One cannot underestimate the importance of this addition; this was not a threat or the standard negotiating practice of a *pronunciamiento*, this was a *camarillero* tactic. The *camarilleros* did not want centralism; they wanted local power and they wanted sufficient relative autonomy in order to carry out their regionalist economic and trade practices without impositions or interferences from the centre. Indeed, they had been the ones who seceded in 1821 and again in 1823, were stubborn enough to maintain trade with Cuba throughout 1824 in spite of the Mexican declaration of war on Spain, and had plotted for secession in 1824 as well: why on earth would they ever want a centralist government? They had their own intentions and their own regionalist ideology to implement, and were consequently manipulating the *pronunciamiento* to immediately achieve Yucatecan secession. The *camarilleros* had, as in 1821 and 1823, once more adapted a *pronunciamiento* to make it theirs, modifying it to suit their own local needs. They had turned centralism on its head, to become a sort of *contracentralism*.

Local Congress made a feeble attempt to battle the *pronunciados*. The body granted Governor López extraordinary faculties to defend the federal system, and congress members

⁴²⁶ Ibid., 30 July 1830.

⁴²⁷ Ibid., 10 August 1831.

⁴²⁸ Ibid.

swore loyalty to not recognise the *pronunciados*; they also declared the expulsion of anyone who directly or indirectly supported the *pronunciados*.⁴²⁹ Nevertheless, the poorly armed and trained civic militias were no match for the strong front provided by the unification of the active battalions and the regular army, and the *ligados* soon lost all hope of any popular resistance to the *pronunciamiento*.⁴³⁰ The *pronunciados* dismissed all Liga authorities almost immediately, encountering no resistance. Carvajal then assumed powers of both governor and commander general in accordance with Articles Three and Four of the act. At 7 o' clock that very night of 6 December, he dissolved Local Congress.⁴³¹ He abolished all federal offices, and he ordered the establishment of military barracks throughout the province; in the words of Yucatecan historian Joaquín Baranda, “las ciudades se vieron convertidas en cuarteles, y el Estado todo parecía una plaza sitiada, sin mas ley ni más garantías que la voluntad omnipotente del jefe supremo que la mandaba.”⁴³² A military junta constituted of Roca, Toro, Berna, Sebastián López de Llergo, Ignacio de Castro, Manuel de Lara Bonifas, Leandro Poblaciones, Manuel Duque de Estrada and Francisco Genaro de Cicero as secretary was to run the peninsula.⁴³³

It may seem that the *pronunciamiento* had converted Yucatán into a type of regional authoritarian and praetorian regime, with Carvajal at the head, and his military elite subordinate to him. One should nevertheless recall the character of the active battalions (Carvajal himself was the head of these military units) in Yucatán. The active members were not like the regular army; they had military titles, but in their majority (and more importantly to them) were merchants, *hacendados*, and politicians. Their *pronunciamiento* demands were consequently not militaristic, but political, and their covert intentions would be (as one will discover) concentrated on trade with Cuba. They had used their military rank to guarantee the

⁴²⁹ Campos García, “La política yucateca”, pp.385-386.

⁴³⁰ Negrín Muñoz, *Campeche: una historia compartida*, p.44.

⁴³¹ *El Yucateco Constitucional*, 10 August 1831.

⁴³² Baranda, *Recordaciones*, p.182.

⁴³³ *El Yucateco Constitucional*, 17 August 1831.

success of their movement, but this movement was *not* militaristic, nor did it result in a praetorian regime taking over power from a civilian one. Thus, in Fowler's words:

Lo importante es evitar ser influidos por esquemas anacrónicos, y no conceptualizar el pronunciamiento y la intervención política militar en el México independiente como si oficiales como Antonio López de Santa Anna o Anastasio Bustamante fueron los equivalentes decimonónicos de Alfredo Stroessner, Augusto Pinochet o Jorge Rafael Videla [...] Se supuso, a modo de ejemplo, que los miembros de los ejércitos informales del siglo XIX se vieron a sí mismos como pertenecientes a una casta distinta y aparte de sus contemporáneos civiles, en el sentido que luego hicieron sus sucesores profesionales del siglo XIX.⁴³⁴

Luis Medina Peña has also declared that:

La historia civil ha considerado al ejército de la primera mitad del siglo XIX como una institución no solo tradicional, sino desestabilizadora desde el punto de vista político. Según esta versión, el ejército fue el responsable de todos los vaivenes políticos y de no pocas las desgracias nacionales. Ahí está, se dice, la larga lista de planes, revueltas y *pronunciamientos* para probarlo [...] Tal imagen es producto de un anacronismo: suponer que el ejército de entonces debía comportarse de acuerdo con el modelo de neutralidad política que es propio de los ejércitos del siglo XIX en los países de democracia establecida. Ello ha contribuido a concebir la primera mitad del siglo XIX como una época en altos grados de violencia castrense ejercida sobre las endebles instituciones republicanas [...] En general se ha soslayado considerar al ejército de aquellos días como un actor político legítimo de acuerdo con la mentalidad de la época.⁴³⁵

The *pronunciamiento* had evidently been a top-down political exercise, used by the *camarillero* elite in order to defend their agendas. In the words of José Ortega y Gasset, the *pronunciados* “No iban [...] a luchar, sino a tomar posesión del Poder público.”⁴³⁶ The *camarilleros* had silenced the public vote, constitutionally demonstrated in 1826. The Plan of Perote and *La Acordada* had taught the *pronunciados* well what they had the power to do through the veiled legitimacy of the *pronunciamiento*. The *pronunciamiento* thus demonstrated a pattern which was to be set for the next five years: the weakness of a powerless governor against the strength of the commander general, who had the resources and the men to dictate the political tune of the peninsula through the *pronunciamiento*. According to Medina Peña once more:

⁴³⁴ Fowler, “El pronunciamiento mexicano”, pp.17-18.

⁴³⁵ Medina Peña, *Invención del sistema*, pp.243-244.

⁴³⁶ Ortega y Gasset, *España invertebrada*, p.88.

El ejército nacional es un actor político que en aquel escenario sólo tenía a su disposición el pronunciamiento, el plan y la revuelta como formas de acción política corporativa. El ejército recurría al pronunciamiento no para asolar el país, sino como medio para contrarrestar y enfrentar a la clase política civil ubicada en el Congreso y en los gobiernos de los estados.⁴³⁷

Additionally as Báquer has pointed out, it was not a despotic government which had provoked a *pronunciamiento* from its opposition, but a *weak* government: “alguien está en condiciones de poner a prueba la existencia operativa del Estado, es el grupo social que mejor conoce sus debilidades.”⁴³⁸ Zavala would later state:

Aquel movimiento y sus consecuencias, es uno de los grandes argumentos contra la compatibilidad entre el régimen militar [...] [y] las formas republicanas adoptadas en el país. Ochocientos hombres de guarnición en Campeche, y otros tantos en Mérida, fueron suficientes para echar abajo las leyes constitucionales, deponer al jefe supremo del Estado de Yucatán, disolver la asamblea legislativa y establecer un régimen militar, que bajo la denominación genérica de centralismo, sujetaba a una península de setecientos mil habitantes a las ordenanzas del ejército [...] Lo más extravagante era que esa usurpación de los poderes públicos se hacía en nombre del Estado, cuyas autoridades populares habían sido despojadas, y vilipendiadas; cuya constitución fue hollada.⁴³⁹

The view of Josèp Fontana also supports this perspective:

[El pronunciamiento] consagraba una nueva fórmula política que permitía llevar a cabo un proceso revolucionario controlado, dirigido por unas minorías políticas y militares 'liberales' en que al pueblo le estaba reservado simplemente el papel de beneficiario pasivo, cuya participación no había de ir mas allá de mostrar su apoyo y aclamar a los caudillos que habían arriesgado sus vidas por la libertad de todos.⁴⁴⁰

The rhetoric used by the Carvajal administration to justify their *pronunciamiento* clearly demonstrated the valuable lesson they had learnt from Mexico in 1828. They claimed that *La Acordada* and the consequent “ilegitimidad” of the “gobierno inconstitucional” which was “contra los votos legales de la mayoría de los estados” had broken the social order, and thus a *pronunciamiento* against said administration was not only legitimate, but necessary. In their words, “la época infausta de 827 a 829, época de sediciones y de trastornos, de

⁴³⁷ Medina Peña, *Invencción del sistema*, p.244.

⁴³⁸ Báquer, *El modelo español*, p.28.

⁴³⁹ Zavala, *Ensayo Histórico*, pp.155-156.

⁴⁴⁰ Josèp Fontana, "Prólogo", in Irene Castells, *La utopía insurreccional del liberalismo. Torrijos y las conspiraciones liberales de la década ominosa* (Barcelona: Editorial Crítica, 1989), p.ix.

pronunciamientos que destruían las garantías constitucionales, y de otros que tuvieron por objeto, aunque no por resultado, restablecerlas y reformarlas” meant that there was a veritable crisis of legitimacy, which needed to be solved.⁴⁴¹ In their eyes, their movement was a valid *pronunciamiento*, as the national government had never been constitutional in the first place. Now they were responsible for installing a new order, so as to reset the political security of the nation. They applied this same rhetoric to the Liga government (despite the fact that it had been popularly elected). The *pronunciados* condemned it as “un partido [...] que trabajaba solo por sí y no por los pueblos,”⁴⁴² an administration which was in contradiction to the wishes of the people, thus bolstering the patriotic cause of the *pronunciados* even more. The *pronunciados* consequently claimed themselves as part of an “empresa heroica y gloriosa de salvar la nación.”⁴⁴³ The *pronunciados* used this rhetoric very consciously; the need to seem like the saviours of the *patria*, rescuing it from an unwanted administration was part and parcel of *pronunciamiento* legitimacy. In the words of Brian Connaughton et.al, “La forja de una hegemonía política requiere de un lenguaje capaz de penetrar a las distintas capas sociales; debe ofrecer la promesa de una nueva legitimidad y una justificación ideológica y política que incluye y articule en sus pretensiones a toda la población.”⁴⁴⁴

Not surprisingly, the *camarilleros* in power showed no intention of interacting with the national administration subsequent to their *pronunciamiento*; they had achieved relative independence and the autonomy needed to carry out their desires. The centralists quickly lost hope in negotiating with Mexico when Carvajal denied Zavala (which had been commissioned by President Guerrero to enter into talks with the *pronunciados*) the right to even step on to Yucatecan land, claiming him to be an “atentador del pronunciamiento” and declaring that if he returned to Yucatán, he would be executed by a firing squad

⁴⁴¹ José Segundo Carvajal, *Manifiesto del jefe superior de Yucatán*, p.6.

⁴⁴² Ibid.

⁴⁴³ José Segundo Carvajal, *El Comandante general de Yucatán a sus compañeros*, AGN, Gobernación, Sin Sección, Caja 141, Exp.25, Mérida, 29 July 1831.

⁴⁴⁴ Connaughton et.al., “Introducción”, p.14.

immediately.⁴⁴⁵ The centralist cause was further derailed when news arrived of the success of the Plan of Jalapa *pronunciamiento* of 4 December 1829, which was not centralist as had been rumoured, but was an act declaring instead the reformation of the representative popular federal system and the replacement of Guerrero by the more moderate figure of Anastasio Bustamante.⁴⁴⁶ This sent the Yucatecan centralists into despair; there was no hope for their movement, and instead separation from Mexico was now guaranteed, giving the *camarilleros* the full opportunity to implement their project which was completely contradictory to centralism.

On 24 December, the Yucatecan military ruling the peninsula rejected an invitation from Veracruz to second the Plan of Jalapa of 4 December, declaring that it did not solve “el mal en su origen.” Instead, they agreed unanimously to ratify the *pronunciamiento* of Campeche.⁴⁴⁷ General Anastasio Bustamante became president of Mexico on 1 January 1830, and despite the installation of a much less radical government which was surrounded and directed by the *hombres de bien*, the Carvajal administration pressed on in their determination to remain separated. On 28 February, it rejected talks with Felipe Codallos and Tomás Requeña who had been commissioned by Bustamante to attempt negotiation with the powers of the peninsula. Minister of War José Antonio Facio then tried sending Martín Peraza with the same intentions, but the Carvajal administration also turned him away.⁴⁴⁸ Mexicans were mystified by the stubborn actions of the *carvajalistas*, having no idea of their real agenda of regionalism, “Lo ocurrido en Yucatán es verdaderamente un fenómeno, un hecho singular, aislado y sin trascendencia: un día se revelará a la nación el misterio que hasta hoy cubre el verdadero origen de este suceso.”⁴⁴⁹ Even British diplomat in Mexico, Richard Pakenham, with his convinced belief that Yucatecans preferred “the Federal System, under which they

⁴⁴⁵ Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, p.325.

⁴⁴⁶ Anna, *Forging*, p.215.

⁴⁴⁷ Campos García, “La política yucateca”, p.393.

⁴⁴⁸ Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, p.329; *El Gladiador*, 18 September 1830.

⁴⁴⁹ *El Observador de la República Mexicana*, 24 March 1830.

enjoyed the privileges of enacting their own laws, and regulating as they thought proper all matters of Internal administration” thought it “strange that a Country so circumstanced, should [...] for a period of nearly three years – that is to say, from November 1829, till the end of 1832 – have held out against the Government of Mexico in favour of a Central Government.”⁴⁵⁰ With all attempts at negotiation failed, the national government ended financial aid to the peninsula, and established full customs duties on all products coming from Yucatán.⁴⁵¹ On 5 April, the Yucatecan general assembly issued the *Acta instituyente de la asamblea general de la provincia de Yucatán*, which reinforced their stance that they would recognise and obey the Mexican government only when it pronounced for centralism, and that they had the right to review and approve all decrees emanating from the centre.⁴⁵² The *carvajalistas* were gradually cementing relative sovereignty.

While the *carvajalistas* had been rejecting talks with Mexico, they had been busy in other matters. Illicit trade with Cuba now rose under the Carvajal administration, as the Mexican newspaper *El Gladiador* remarked “con la mayor desvergüenza llegaban con frecuencia buques en derecha de la Habana cargados de efectos españoles.”⁴⁵³ The Yucatecan government also allowed the tax free import of flour, along with all other products which Yucatán could not manufacture.⁴⁵⁴ They took more pro-Spanish measures, inviting more than 30 Spaniards who had been expelled under the government of López to return to Yucatán, along with others who had actually taken part in the invasion project of Barradas.⁴⁵⁵ Carvajal’s administration also had Spanish military figures Simón Ortega, José Ampudia, Agustín Mier y Terán and José Ontiveros exonerated from previous crimes of treason.⁴⁵⁶ The governor then publicly stated that that there existed nothing in common between Yucatán and

⁴⁵⁰ Letter from R. Pakenham, to Lord Aberdeen, The National Archives, F.O.50/135, Mexico, 21 April 1840.

⁴⁵¹ *El Gladiador*, 21 January 1831.

⁴⁵² *La Concordia Yucateca*, 29 May 1830.

⁴⁵³ *El Gladiador*, 7 March 1831.

⁴⁵⁴ Campos García, *De provincia*, p.193.

⁴⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵⁶ *El Noticioso*, 17 July 1830.

the other Mexican states,⁴⁵⁷ the union of Mexico and Yucatán was based on false data, and that a policy based on facts “probarían que Yucatán jamás debería unirse a la república mexicana, pues jamás será feliz un país regido por instituciones que no se conforman a sus leyes, su ignorancia y sus costumbres.”⁴⁵⁸ The Carvajal regime began suggesting that the general government should follow the examples of Buenos Aires, Colombia and Central America, countries which in spite of their declarations of independence, had decided to maintain mercantile relations with the Spanish colonies in America.⁴⁵⁹ Carvajal then declared in 1831 that:

el sistema mercantil que se adoptó para toda la República, no podía comprenderle sin la ruina total de la Península, porque no hay nada de común entre la posición geográfica, las circunstancias locales, las relaciones mercantiles y la clase de industria de la misma Península con los demás Estados de la Unión.⁴⁶⁰

Additionally, as Robert Patch has noted:

the strengthening of ties with Cuba [...] were certainly behind Yucatán’s well-known tendency toward separatism [...] Certainly, without strong economic ties to the rest of Mexico, the willingness of Yucatecan elites to contemplate such separation was greater, and this political tendency naturally would exacerbate any other divisive issues that might emerge.⁴⁶¹

Rumours also began that *camarilleros* Pedro José Guzmán, Carvajal, Pedro Manuel Regil and Pedro Escudero de la Rocha together with Perfecto de Baranda and Pedro de Baranda were all plotting to officially recommence trade with Cuba. The *yorkino* newspaper *El Noticioso* reported in July 1830 that the Cuban authorities were manifesting interest in uniting with Yucatán, with the Cuban Captain General sending “a Yucatán un espía para explorar que podía esperarse” of the *camarilleros*.⁴⁶² The Mexican newspaper *El Sol* reported, “Entendemos que hay proyectos muy avanzados, muchos de ellos impracticables,

⁴⁵⁷ Carvajal, *Manifiesto* [...], 29 June 1831.

⁴⁵⁸ *El Tribuno del Pueblo Mexicano*, 10 September 1831.

⁴⁵⁹ *El Gladiador*, 3 March 1831.

⁴⁶⁰ Carvajal, *Manifiesto*, p.7.

⁴⁶¹ Robert Patch, “The Bourbon Reforms, City Councils, and the Struggle for Power in Yucatán, 1770-1796”, in Rodríguez O. (ed.), *Mexico in the Age of Democratic Revolutions*, p.59.

⁴⁶² *El Noticioso*, 16 July 1830.

aunque podemos afirmar que todos están fundados sobre el principio de independencia de toda dominación extranjera.”⁴⁶³ In 1833, Yucatecan political figure Ignacio Basadre confided to Bustamante that Carvajal “puso a disposición del gobierno de la Habana, por medio de una comisión, al estado de Yucatán en caso de que fuese atacado por el gobierno federal de la república.”⁴⁶⁴ The Mexican administration’s proposal to close all foreign and national commerce to the ports of Yucatán – in retaliation against the recalcitrant *pronunciados* – led to *camarillero* Gutiérrez de Estrada’s threat “que Yucatán así hostilizado, abriría su comercio a la isla de Cuba, tomaría en lo político otra resolución contraria a sus reiteradas protestas de continuar siendo una parte integrante de la Nación Mejicana,”⁴⁶⁵ adding that “no puede privar al estado del derecho imprescriptible de organizarse por sí mismo, de gobernarse en lo interior, de juzgar y fallar por sí mismo sobre la legitimidad o ilegitimidad de sus autoridades propias.”⁴⁶⁶ Yucatecans and Mexicans alike were slowly realising that centralism had been an idea farthest from the minds of the *pronunciados*. Shunned centralist Joaquín Casares y Armas now claimed that the Camarilla had taken advantage of the *pronunciamiento* to revive its old separatist plans of union with Spain,⁴⁶⁷ with federalist Zavala suggesting the same.⁴⁶⁸ Guerrero himself denounced the *pronunciados* as “un puñado de anarquistas”, adding that “quieren ellos llevarlo a práctica lo que no pudo efectuar el gobierno español en el frenesí de su reconquista.”⁴⁶⁹

Despite the ambitions of the *carvajalistas*, their secessionist dream was not to last for long, as shall be demonstrated in the following chapter. What remains significant here is that their *pronunciamiento* had been novel in several aspects: for the first time, *pronunciados*

⁴⁶³ *El Sol*, 17 January 1830.

⁴⁶⁴ *El Siglo XIX, Periódico del gobierno del estado libre y soberano de Yucatán*, 27 November 1840.

⁴⁶⁵ Un Yucateco, *El Proyecto de ley del señor senador Vargas para pacificar el estado de Yucatán*, (México: Publ. unknown, 27 January 1831), Biblioteca Nacional, Colección Lafragua 492, México, p.42.

⁴⁶⁶ Un Yucateco, *Observaciones*, 1831, p.13.

⁴⁶⁷ *Eco de Yucatán*, 6 February 1830.

⁴⁶⁸ Zavala, *Ensayo Histórico*, p.158.

⁴⁶⁹ Vicente Guerrero, *El Presidente de la República*, Benson Latin American Collection: Grito de Centralismo, Campeche, 20 November 1829.

had used the practice as a national negotiating force as well as a local overthrowing tactic; it had also targeted specific administrations instead of just the political system. Moreover, the call for centralism had evidently been a farce by the *camarillero* elite to completely fulfil their regionalist (and even separatist) desires, for the first time illustrating the *pronunciamiento* as a façade and a strategic practice for the elite in the peninsula to realise their own specific projects. The power of the military behind intimidating others who were clearly against the act also disputed the so-called claim to the *voluntad del pueblo*, which had since the *pronunciamiento*'s inception been used to justify the existence of the practice; indeed, the *pronunciados* had only accomplished victory in this instance because of the fear which the *camarillero* military and the commander general had inspired. The *pronunciamiento* was thus now a precursor to repression and intimidation to all those who were against the *pronunciados*. Nevertheless, this is not to say that the *pronunciamiento* was exclusively a militaristic practice. As has been demonstrated, significant political and economic motivations and sectors were behind the *pronunciamiento*, with civilians using their military rank to their advantage. *Pronunciados* would again use this capitalisation on armed power continually throughout the 1830s; indeed, 1829 was just a glimpse into the abyss of what was to come, and the violent force which the *pronunciamiento* would become in early 1830s Yucatán.

**Local Politics and National Influence:
The Federalist *Pronunciamientos* of 1831-1832**

Cuando no se observa la constitución
no existe el pacto constitucional;
cuando no hay autoridad legítima,
no puede haber rebelión.⁴⁷⁰

The *pronunciamientos* of 1831-1832 demonstrated the next phase in the evolution of the practice in terms of its conversion from a solely national exercise of negotiation into a key instrument used in the local struggle for political power between two key factions in Yucatán: the federalists and the *carvajalistas*. These *pronunciamientos* were primarily demonstrations of the federalist opposition which had been building since the *carvajalistas*' takeover of government in 1829. While the *pronunciamientos* of 1831 would be primarily local, – and unsuccessful – that of 1832 would triumph mainly because of General Antonio López de Santa Anna's order to his brother-in-law Francisco de Paula Toro (who was stationed in Campeche as the commander of arms of the regular army) that Yucatán pronounce for federalism. Led by Toro, the *pronunciados* of 1832 would demand a federal system, while simultaneously calling for the dismissal of the Carvajal administration. This not only highlighted the enduring importance of Mexican political events and *pronunciamientos* on Yucatecan politics, but also demonstrated once more the significance of the inspiration *from without*, if a Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* was to be successful. Additionally, these *pronunciamientos* illustrated the now indispensable need for military force to guarantee the success of a Yucatecan *pronunciamiento*; indeed, one of the main reasons behind the triumph of the *pronunciamiento* of 1832 was the military position and influence of Toro. This only served to demonstrate even further the powerlessness of the government against military

⁴⁷⁰ *El Sol*, 22 June 1831.

force, a pattern which had been established since the *pronunciamiento* of 1829. Finally, the *pronunciamientos* of this period were the initial markers of what was to be a decade of administrative instability in Yucatán. Throughout this period, *pronunciados* would constantly question the legitimacy of (and consequently overthrow) administrations which had been brought to power through *pronunciamientos*, thus exposing the fragility of such ruling authorities, especially when faced with a powerful opposition.

The Carvajal administration of 1829 was not to last for long. As has been demonstrated in the previous chapter, although powerful, it was a minor faction of separatist *camarilleros*; consequently, it faced significant ideological opposition in the peninsula (mainly concentrated in the large federalist faction, with the smaller faction of Campechean centralists still present). The *pronunciamiento* of 1831 would thus be manifestly local, with its main objective being the end of the Carvajal regime. The *patriotas campechanos*, furious at the hijacking of their *pronunciamiento* in 1829, were determined to right the wrongs committed by the *carvajalistas*. Additionally, the defiance of the *carvajalistas* towards the Mexican administration had debilitated the Campechean merchants' trade relations with those of Mexico.⁴⁷¹ Campecheans consequently did not hesitate to condemn the monopoly established in Yucatán by the *carvajalistas*, stating:

Uno de los mayores inconvenientes que tiene el actual orden de cosas de Yucatán, es que ha resultado la manía de cierto antiguo partido de la capital, que siempre ha propendido a la escisión del estado, con objeto de repartirse los destinos y organizar establemente su dominio.⁴⁷²

They then declared that the actions of the *carvajalistas* would “resultar muy perjudicados” for the Campechean businessmen “por sus relaciones mercantiles con México,” predicting that “tarde o temprano estallará una división que induzca la necesidad de reconocer la unidad nacional.”⁴⁷³ The Sixth and Thirteenth Permanent Battalions (constituting the regular army),

⁴⁷¹ *Eco de Yucatán*, 18 July 1829; 13 January and 6 February 1830; *El Gladiador*, 2 September 1831.

⁴⁷² *Eco de Yucatán*, 6 February 1830.

⁴⁷³ *Ibid.*

commanded by Ignacio Castro and Francisco de Paula Toro respectively and thus ever loyal to Mexico, also declared their intentions to block any move by the *carvajalistas* to reunite with Cuba, and threatened revolt if they tried to do so.⁴⁷⁴

The *patriotas* were not alone in their opposition to the *carvajalistas*, and another pocket of dissatisfied elite members would be responsible for the *pronunciamiento* of 1831. The Bustamante administration, or the *partido de orden* of 1830, guided by future conservative ideologue Lucas Alamán and made up of the *hombres de bien*, had been responsible for a dramatic change from the radical popular government of Guerrero. Openly elitist, the administration “did not touch de jure federalism, but it practiced a de facto centralism,”⁴⁷⁵ as it implemented constitutional reforms which limited the autonomy of the states and replaced universal suffrage with only property-owning citizens being allowed to vote. This change in governmental policies significantly influenced political opinion in Yucatán. With the exception of the *carvajalistas* ruling the peninsula, the *camarilleros* had in their majority remained passive in the centralist *pronunciamiento*.⁴⁷⁶ One should recall that the *camarilleros*, though greedy for local rule, were still in their majority liberal, and had not prepared themselves for the hierarchical and separatist administration which was ruling the peninsula. *Camarilleros* such as Francisco Martínez de Arredondo, Pedro Castillo, José María León and Porfirio Argüelles, in Lieutenant of Cavalry Manuel Cantón’s words “eran federalistas [...] todos los hombres de bien y el populacho estaban irritadísimos”⁴⁷⁷ with the turn which the Carvajal regime had taken. These so called *bustamantistas* started secretly negotiating with the national administration for reunification with Mexico under the Bustamante system, “instruidos y autorizados por el gobierno general”, with Minister of War

⁴⁷⁴ El que despeja la incógnita, *¿Es el ministerio quien dirige los planes de Yucatán?* (México: Imprenta de Galván a cargo de Mariano Arévalo, 27 August 1830), Biblioteca Nacional, Colección Lafragua 892, p.14.

⁴⁷⁵ Jesús Reyes Heróles, *El liberalismo mexicano* Tomo II (México City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1974), p.156, quoted in Anna, *Forging*, p.231.

⁴⁷⁶ *El Gladiador*, 10 May 1831.

⁴⁷⁷ *El Gladiador*, 25 April, 7 and 8 May 1831.

José Antonio Facio supplying funds for a *camarillero*-inspired *pronunciamiento*. Colonel of the First Active Battalion Benito Aznar (who had been, as one can recall, against the Carvajal *pronunciamiento* in the first place) was the leader of the conspiracy.⁴⁷⁸ Campecheans such as Pedro Manuel de Regil – who had trade with Mexico to sustain – also turned towards the *bustamantistas*. This pro-Mexican faction began publishing in their newspaper *El Gladiador* articles condemning Carvajal for not making any effort to negotiate with Mexico, and thus counteracting “seguir la suerte de la república entregada hoy a manos puras.”⁴⁷⁹ The *carvajalistas* consequently became reduced to a small nucleus of “tres o cuatro familias” of Carvajal, Gutiérrez de Estrada, Calderón, and Sebastián Peón.⁴⁸⁰

In Easter of 1831, the first inter-party *pronunciamiento* in Yucatán manifested the extent of this *camarillero* division. On the morning of 27 March, Carvajal had ordered a new flag to be flown in Mérida with the logo of “Centralismo o Muerte.” The opposition interpreted this act as a “refinada malicia de parte de los facciosos” which to them was the equivalent of declaring the “absoluta separación de México”, and the event produced “en los habitantes un alarma general, y se empezó a notar un disgusto e inquietud en todas las clases.”⁴⁸¹ The military *camarilleros* in opposition then quickly organised a *pronunciamiento* in the state capital, headed by Benito Aznar, Lieutenant Colonel of the First Active Battalion Felipe de Cámara, Captain of the First Active Battalion Francisco Peraza, and Lieutenant of the First Active Battalion Luis Zunzuneguí. On the same day, they issued the *Pronunciamiento restaurador de la unión a Mexico, y de la soberanía de Yucatán*, demanding reunification with Mexico under the federal system. The *pronunciados*, considering that there was established in Mexico the “más justo, más benéfico y más liberal” administration, declared that nothing should stop them from “disfrutar de aquel goce.” They

⁴⁷⁸ El que despeja, *¿Es el ministerio quien [...]*, 27 August 1830, pp.12-13.

⁴⁷⁹ *El Gladiador*, 18 September 1830.

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid., 18 and 27 March, 23 April, 8 May 1831.

⁴⁸¹ Ibid., 6 May 1831.

accused the ruling *camarilleros* that the only thing preventing them from reuniting with Mexico was not the imposition of a national centralist system, but the fear of being replaced by the previous constitutional authorities if the national government ordered it to be. The *pronunciados* not only petitioned for a different political system, but stipulated that *camarillero* Benito Aznar was to become commander general, and called for new elections for the representatives of National Congress and the Chamber of Representatives.⁴⁸² The *pronunciamiento*, although with primarily local demands, still evidently had its basic requirement as reunification with Mexico, demonstrating once more the dual aim of the practice. The *pronunciamiento* had also served to clearly illustrate the deep split which had developed within the *camarillero* party, thus being a clear marker of the evolving political identities and ideologies which were taking place.

The subsequent repression by the ruling *camarilleros* of their previous political brothers was characteristic of a repressive government. They arrested the *pronunciados*, along with figures who had nothing to do with the *pronunciamiento*, such as federalist Liga members José Tiburcio López, Juan de Dios Cosgaya, Antonio Seguí and José María Meneses.⁴⁸³ Carvajal and his minute circle of separatists then declared on Easter Sunday that they would sooner unite with Guatemala than Mexico.⁴⁸⁴ After shutting down the federalist newspapers *La Catédra Política* and *El Noticioso*, the opposition criticised the administration as a “gobierno despótico y puramente militar.”⁴⁸⁵ The opposition was becoming uncontrollable, as yet another *pronunciamiento* occurred on 4 June in Mérida, once more calling for union with Mexico, this time with the *carvajalistas* imprisoning *camarilleros* (and members of the First Active Battalion) Manuel Molina, Palomeque,⁴⁸⁶ Lieutenant of

⁴⁸² Ibid., 6 and 7 May 1831.

⁴⁸³ Ibid., 27, 28 March; 27 April and 6 May 1831.

⁴⁸⁴ Ibid, 8 May 1831.

⁴⁸⁵ *El Yucateco Constitucional*, 30 July and 31 August 1831; *El Gladiador*, 7 May 1831.

⁴⁸⁶ The document refers to only the surname; it can refer to one of the two brothers Simón and Manuel Palomeque, who were both *camarilleros*.

granaderos Eusebio Sabido, and the two Villafaña brothers (Sergeant José María and Lieutenant of *granaderos* Félix).⁴⁸⁷ The *ayuntamiento* of Mérida then condemned the state into which the regime had let the peninsula degenerate, as its leader Juan José Rosado declared that until the Carvajal administration bowed to the demands of others, the peninsula would be cursed with factional bickering for the “posesión de los puestos públicos, y el manejo de las riendas del gobierno” by parties which “acreditan la legitimidad de sus pretensiones” with “la verdadera o imaginaria voluntad soberana de los pueblos.” For the *ayuntamiento*, the reestablishment of the federal government was the only solution to the constant disorder.⁴⁸⁸ The *ayuntamientos* of Campeche and Mérida then officially voted for federalism on 18 June, followed by those of Tizimín, Hunucmá, and Hecelchakán.⁴⁸⁹ On 13 July, a *junta de Guerra* in Campeche (constituted of recently promoted Commander of Arms of Campeche Francisco de Paula Toro, Commander of Artillery Francisco Javier Verna, *comisario de Guerra* Tomás Aznar, Colonel of the Sixth Permanent Battalion Ignacio Roca, Commander of the Thirteenth Permanent Battalion Francisco Calderón, Lieutenant Colonel Joaquín Rivas, First Adjutant of the Second Active Battalion Sebastián López de Llergo and Colonel of Artillery Francisco Javier Verna), “haciendo uso legítimo de sus derechos naturales y políticos” demanded the federal system. Incidentally, with the exception of Aznar and Calderón, every one of these figures had participated in the centralist movement and *pronunciamiento* of 1829, and Carvajal had subsequently lost their support through his stubbornness and refusal to listen to their demands to reunite with Mexico.⁴⁹⁰ Carvajal now no longer had the backing of the permanent and active battalions, the principal bastions of his power, and the very same forces which had brought him into governance. In the words of the editors of *El Sol*:

⁴⁸⁷ *El Yucateco Constitucional*, 30 July and 31 August 1831.

⁴⁸⁸ “Acta de la sesión secreta del 27 de junio de 1831”, Mérida, *Acuerdos desde 1º de enero de 1830 hasta 23 de diciembre de 1832*, CAIHY.

⁴⁸⁹ *El Sol*, 6 and 30 August 1831.

⁴⁹⁰ *El Sol*, 10 August 1831.

Los pueblos no quieren más trastornos; ya aprendieron a traducir el idioma engañoso del interés individual que se disfraza con la expresión consagrada al culto de las grandes verdades del interés público [...] ya no más corresponden a los gritos de la ambición y de los resentimientos de un caudillo que proclama un orden nuevo sobre una perspectiva de bienes fingidos.⁴⁹¹

Carvajal and his circle were outnumbered, and on 3 October 1831, the Yucatecan provincial council, accepting that there was no hope of establishing a centralist system, declared the “unión sincera y eterna a la república mexicana”⁴⁹² and the observance of the federal constitution. The *carvajalistas* nevertheless refused to step down from power despite the change of the political system, meaning essentially that nothing had changed.⁴⁹³

Discontent was consequently still heavily manifest. Experiences throughout 1831 had demonstrated that local *pronunciamientos*, without sufficient organised military force and without a national *pronunciamiento* to latch on to, were destined for failure. The opposers to the Carvajal regime thus lay in wait, hoping for a movement from without which they could adhere to and depose the Carvajal administration. They did not have to wait for very long. In Mexico, the federalists were harshly criticising Bustamante’s government for its increasingly repressive nature. It had censored nearly all federalist newspapers, deposed federally-inclined governors in more than ten states, expelled U.S. Plenipotentiary and liberal colleague of Zavala, Joel Poinsett from the country, reduced the civic militias in several states, and above all, had authorized the execution of General Guerrero on 14 February 1831.⁴⁹⁴ The execution of a former war hero and president was one step too far; the moderates who had supported the Bustamante government now began to turn away from the administration.⁴⁹⁵ One moderate liberal in particular had been angered by the execution; Santa Anna had written to Bustamante (ironically on the day after Guerrero’s execution, without even knowing of it),

⁴⁹¹ Ibid.

⁴⁹² *Manifiesto de la Convención del estado de Yucatán a los pueblos que lo componen* (Mérida, Yucatán: Imprenta de Lorenzo Seguí, calle del Puente, 1831), Biblioteca Nacional: Colección Lafragua 892, p.5.

⁴⁹³ Varios Yucatecos, *Impugnación*, pp lviii; 22-23; Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, p.334.

⁴⁹⁴ Pedro Santoni, *Mexicans at Arms: puro federalists and the politics of war, 1845-1848* (Fort Worth, Tex: Texas Christian University Press, 1996), p.17.

⁴⁹⁵ Tenenbaum, “They went Thataway”, p.195.

warning him not to carry out the plan. Indeed, Santa Anna had supported Guerrero in 1828, and he had not agreed with his deposition in 1830. He was now upset about the execution of his comrade (who had also been godfather to his daughter), and he started planning to bring down the Bustamante government. He was not alone; the regional military leaders of the civic militias (especially those of Zacatecas) had resented the onslaught on their power and privileges, and plots for a *pronunciamiento* against the Bustamante administration began.

In November 1831, with no response from the Bustamante administration to his request that something be done about its centralist tendencies, General Miguel Barragán united with Generals Santa Anna, Joaquín Parres, and Luis Cortázar in Veracruz to conspire for the downfall of the government.⁴⁹⁶ On 2 January 1832, Colonel Pedro Landero and Commander Ciriaco Vázquez issued the *Acta y Plan de Veracruz sobre remoción del Ministerio*. The *pronunciamiento* denounced “los atentados cometidos contra la Constitución y garantías públicas e individuales” by the Bustamante administration and subsequently demanded the “remoción del Ministerio, a quien la opinión pública acusa de protector del centralismo.”⁴⁹⁷ The *pronunciamiento* called also for the renewal of the Bustamante cabinet, the respect for the federal system (reiterating the demands of the Plan of Jalapa of 1829), and an offer to Santa Anna to lead the *pronunciamiento*. Santa Anna accepted the plan the very next day, and the *pronunciamiento* got under way.⁴⁹⁸

In Yucatán, the news of the *pronunciamiento* set free *ligado*, *campechano*, and in major part *camarillero* enthusiasm to rejoin Mexico. Nevertheless, the invitation from Santa Anna in Veracruz to second the *pronunciamiento* and re-establish in Yucatán “el verdadero orden constitucional”⁴⁹⁹ was met by an outright snub by the *carvajalistas*. In Carvajal’s

⁴⁹⁶ Anna, *Forging*, p.233.

⁴⁹⁷ <http://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/pronunciamientos/database/index.php?f=y&id=988&m=01&y=1832>

⁴⁹⁸ Fowler, *Santa Anna*, p.134.

⁴⁹⁹ *Libro de acuerdos del congreso del estado libre de Yucatán, de 3 de enero a 13 de marzo de 1832*, AGEY, Congreso, Acuerdos, Vol.16, Exp.1.

words, “Yucatán no estaba en el caso de hacer pronunciamiento alguno, ni adherirse a los que se hagan de ninguna clase” because:

La experiencia de los dos últimos años ha acreditado que así como en nada puede influir por medios extraordinarios con respecto al resto de la república en su cambio, así tampoco en variación o modificación alguna del gobierno político sea de la naturaleza que fuere.⁵⁰⁰

Carvajal also argued that Yucatán had already sworn its adhesion and obedience to the Bustamante government. Indeed, the *carvajalistas* had made good progress with the national administration, as by 6 March 1832, the Bustamante government had granted amnesty and permission to the 1829 *pronunciados* to organise their own internal political system.⁵⁰¹ After the rejection of the plan of Veracruz, Carvajal then actually sent troops to Tabasco to fight against the *pronunciados* there.⁵⁰² His small force of 300 men joined powerful army forces which had been commanded by the Bustamante administration to put down the *pronunciados*. The *pronunciamiento* had nevertheless received the support of the militias in Zacatecas, led principally by Valentín Gómez Farías and governor of Zacatecas Francisco García. The clashes between the regular army and the *pronunciados* who were slowly advancing towards Mexico – despite several defeats – led to the bloodiest period of independent Mexico; for the first time in Mexican history, a *pronunciamiento* had led to outright and widespread bloodshed and civil war.

In Yucatán, emotions were high. This was the moment that Carvajal’s opposers had been waiting for, and his rejection of the Plan of Veracruz had been the last straw. On midnight on 8 June, a *pronunciamiento* seconding the Plan of Veracruz erupted among the “pequeña guarnición” of Sisal (made up of 70 men) under the orders of Commander of Sisal and Captain of Infantry Eulogio Rosado and Lieutenant Colonel of the First Active Battalion

⁵⁰⁰ Letter from José Segundo Carvajal to Santa Anna, CAIHY, *Correspondencia con el supremo gobierno de la federación, 13 de marzo de 1827 a 7 de septiembre de 1832*, Mérida, 23 January 1832; *El Duende*, 1 February 1832; Álvarez, *Anales Históricos*, pp.238-239.

⁵⁰¹ *El Regulador Yucateco*, 7 April 1832.

⁵⁰² *Ibid.*, 3 March 1832.

Gerónimo López de Llergo.⁵⁰³ Only Lieutenant of Infantry Antonio Milán in Mérida managed to second the *pronunciamiento* before the regular army, not of their own accord but ordered by Carvajal, completely suffocated the *pronunciamiento* on 10 and 11 June.⁵⁰⁴ The official local newspaper – the *Regulador Yucateco* – reported that it was a matter of no significance, and denounced the *ligado pronunciados* for their ridiculous attempt to “apoderarse de las riendas del gobierno.”⁵⁰⁵ With their *pronunciamiento* put down and dismissed as inconsequential, the federalists unleashed their fury. Blood flowed in June, as the elections for the *ayuntamiento* of Hecelchakán turned into a violent scene between federalists and *carvajalistas*, ending with “la triste escena de varios muertos y heridos.”⁵⁰⁶ The government nevertheless continued trumpeting to Mexico that Yucatán was enjoying “la dulce e inalterable paz” which the regime offered.⁵⁰⁷ The deposed constitutional Vice-Governor Juan de Dios Cosgaya in his newspaper *El Baluarte de la Libertad* then began condemning the anti-constitutionalism of the Carvajal regime which was against public opinion; typical *pronunciamiento* rhetoric.⁵⁰⁸

The federalists also started spreading the belief among the regular army in Campeche that Carvajal’s granting of jobs had been a clear demonstration of his favouritism of the Meridians in the active battalions.⁵⁰⁹ They were gaining success, as in the newspaper *El Meridano Imparcial* there appeared a sarcastic dialogue between two fictitious persons, Juan y José (Juan de Dios Cosgaya and José Tiburcio López, perhaps?) that an alliance between a section of the military and the *ligados* had been struck, with three main objectives: 1. Support Santa Anna, 2. Declare null the centralist administration of 5 November 1829 and 3.

⁵⁰³ Ibid., 12 June 1832.

⁵⁰⁴ Ibid., 16 June 1832.

⁵⁰⁵ Ibid., 12 June and 6 July 1832.

⁵⁰⁶ Campos García, “La política yucateca”, p.488.

⁵⁰⁷ *Libro de sesiones del congreso del estado libre de Yucatán. De 20 de agosto a 8 de noviembre de 1832*, CAIHY.

⁵⁰⁸ *El Regulador Yucateco*, 11 September, 1832.

⁵⁰⁹ Ibid., 29 September 1832.

Reimpose all the deposed authorities of 1829.⁵¹⁰ With attacks and unrest growing, on 18 October 1832 Local Congress granted Carvajal extraordinary faculties to expel any person whose “maquinaciones maquiavélicas” threatened to destroy peace and order.⁵¹¹ The combination of the loss of loyalty of the majority of the army, the news that Santa Anna was on the doorstep of Mexico City and with him the inevitable success of the *pronunciamiento*, and the unstoppable attacks on the *carvajalistas* led, however, to Carvajal’s resignation as governor in late October.⁵¹²

The *pronunciamiento* to bring down the Carvajal administration would not come from the Liga or the federalists, but from one man who was being personally directed by Santa Anna. Francisco de Paula Toro, brother-in-law of Santa Anna, and Commander of Arms in Campeche had been under pressure from Santa Anna since mid-1831 to lead Yucatán back to constitutional order, with Santa Anna asking him to raise “con la fuerza que manda en esa plaza, a favor de la Constitución nacional, reconozca los supremos poderes sin restricción alguna, y haga usted que en ese estado sean repuestos todas las cosas como estaban antes de la revolución.”⁵¹³ Toro, under much more immediate domination by Carvajal, and witnessing the constant defeats and slow advance which the *Plan de Veracruz* was suffering, had been initially reluctant to second the *pronunciamiento*.⁵¹⁴ Nevertheless, throughout 1832, after the plan had generated more than 100 *pronunciamientos de adhesión* which had moulded and shaped the demands to end up including a resounding call for the return of Gómez Pedraza to the presidency, it was becoming evident that the *pronunciamiento* would be a success. Combined with the regular army’s loyalty to the executive (who was also incidentally his brother-in-law), the evident demise of the Carvajal regime in face of *ligado*, *camarillero* and

⁵¹⁰ *El Meridano Imparcial*, 6 October 1832.

⁵¹¹ José Segundo Carvajal, *El gobernador y comandante general de Yucatán a sus habitantes*, CAIHY, Impresos, IV.1831.077, Campeche, 18 October 1832.

⁵¹² *El Meridano Imparcial*, 27 October 1832.

⁵¹³ *El Tribuno*, 24 September 1831; *El Gladiador*, 7 March 1832; *El Regulador Yucateco*, 13 March 1832.

⁵¹⁴ *El Regulador Yucateco*, 10, 13 and 31 March 1832.

campechano anger, and the resignation of Carvajal himself, Toro realised that it was time to second the *pronunciamiento*. When Santa Anna finally marched with firm step towards Mexico City, Toro issued the *pronunciamiento de adhesión* in Yucatán.⁵¹⁵

On 4 November 1832, the forces of the regular army under the command of Toro – distributed in the towns of Tenabo, Hecelchakán and Calkiní – issued their *pronunciamiento de adhesión* to the *Plan de Veracruz*.⁵¹⁶ Two days later, Gerónimo López de Llergo, heading the First Active Battalion stationed in Mérida, adhered to the *grito* and both forces formed the “Undécima División del Ejército Libertador”, mimicking the name of the Veracruzan *pronunciados* in order to highlight the national cause of saving the federation (and thus give the necessary national legitimacy to their exercise). On the following day, they drew up their act, where they outlined that the political nightmares which had filled the nation with blood and horror were due to the lack of fulfilment of the federal constitution, and that “el voto unánime de los yucatecos” was against Bustamante. The *pronunciamiento* then declared that the popular will of the people demanded the reimposition of Gómez Pedraza as the legitimate constitutional president of the nation⁵¹⁷ (ignoring the fact – as the rest of the country was doing – that it had been the Santa Anna-inspired *Plan de Perote* and *La Acordada* which had brought him down in the first place).⁵¹⁸

Once more, *pronunciados* employed the dual aspect of national negotiation combined with local deposition. With Toro “Convencido de que el actual estado de Yucatán era sumamente violento [...] por la inconstitucionalidad bajo la cual se hallaban gobernados sus pueblos”, all local authorities of 5 November 1829 were to be re-established.⁵¹⁹ The *pronunciamiento* once more included military ascent, as Toro was made Commander General

⁵¹⁵ *El Tribuno*, 24 September 1831; Michael Costeloe, *La primera república Federal*, pp.237-345.

⁵¹⁶ Campos García, *Que los yucatecos*, p.94.

⁵¹⁷ Campos García, “La política yucateca”, p.493.

⁵¹⁸ Fowler, *Santa Anna*, p.142.

⁵¹⁹ Letter from Toro to the *ayuntamiento* of Campeche, 8 November 1832, in Álvarez, *Anales Históricos*, pp.241-242.

of the state (just as Carvajal had been in 1829, and identical to the demand which had been made for Benito Aznar in the failed *pronunciamiento* of 1831). The *pronunciamiento* had also apparently become a method for military officers to climb to the top of the military and political ladder; the practice was now operating on three levels: national, regional, and personal. Toro was supported by his men, as the Thirteenth Permanent Battalion, along with the *camarillero*-dominated First and Second Active Battalions (commanded by Juan Nepomuceno Trujillo and Sebastián López de Llergo respectively), and Eulogio Rosado (*ligado* who had pronounced in Sisal in June and was captain of infantry), all pronounced in support. The civic militias played their part, as together with the *ayuntamientos* throughout the east of the peninsula, they seconded the *pronunciamiento*. Santiago Imán, elite landowner in the eastern town of Tizimín and captain of the Third Active Battalion (and the man who was about to head the biggest *pronunciamiento* in Yucatecan history in a few years time), headed the *pronunciamiento de adhesión* in the eastern towns of Tizimín and Sucopó. In total, there were more than 3,000 soldiers and officers supporting the plan.⁵²⁰

The detachment of artillery in Campeche (of the permanent army) – headed by Francisco Javier Verna and Joaquín Rivas Zayas – pronounced the plan on 12 November, but modified their *pronunciamiento*, declaring that the local authorities would remain in power, thus attempting to confine the *pronunciamiento* to a purely national cause.⁵²¹ Ignacio Roca, (Colonel of the Sixth Permanent Battalion) was nevertheless pressuring them to support the *pronunciamiento* in its entirety, and when the Campechean *ayuntamiento* adhered to the act, and Colonel Toro (who had already occupied Mérida) announced his plan to march on those who refused to support his *pronunciamiento*, the unit then quickly pronounced the plan in

⁵²⁰ Ibid.

⁵²¹ Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, p.337.

full.⁵²² Military force and adherence to a national *pronunciamiento* had once more proven successful.

The *pronunciados* re-established all deposed authorities of 1829, with the exception of the *Legislatura* and the *ayuntamientos*, whose constitutional period had really ended. The new Local Congress was installed on the 16 November and on the 24th it decreed that all dispositions dictated by the previous administration were null. José Tiburcio López temporarily returned to his post of state governor on 9 November in order to oversee elections. In February 1833 the *ligados* triumphed once more in local elections, with Juan de Dios Cosgaya becoming governor and Santiago Méndez nominated as vice-governor.⁵²³ Meanwhile, in Mexico, Bustamante finally admitted defeat in December, with the Treaty of Zavaleta of 23 December cementing an agreement to allow Gómez Pedraza to resume the presidency, which he did on 26 December.

The 1832 *pronunciamiento* contrasted with that of 1829 in the aspect that it was directly inspired from without (Santa Anna and Toro in 1832) as opposed to within (the centralists and the *camarilleros* in 1829). Toro himself had played a major part in the success of the 1829 *pronunciamiento* which had brought Carvajal to power; the fact that he was the same one to bring him down suggests that external circumstances were playing a strong role in this *pronunciamiento*. Additionally, the failure of the 1831 *pronunciamientos* fortifies the theory that Yucatecan *pronunciados* needed a direct outside impetus in order to issue a successful *pronunciamiento*. Moreover, these *pronunciamientos* served to highlight the now established essentiality of military force in guaranteeing triumph for the *pronunciados*. While the *pronunciamientos* of 1831 were without significant backing from army officers, almost all members of the permanent army and the active battalions carried out the *pronunciamiento* of 1832. Nevertheless, the importance of political – not militaristic – and ideological

⁵²² *Alcance a La Aurora*, 27 September 1832.

⁵²³ Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, p.338.

motivations behind these *pronunciamientos* must be emphasised, as *pronunciado* demands during this period were based on political ideals. Finally, the influence of Mexican political circumstances combined with the fragility of the Yucatecan governing administrations in the face of military power would continue to dominate the early 1830s; indeed, these would be the same factors which would be responsible for the success of the *pronunciamiento* of 1834. In the space of less than two years, neither the national nor local political powers would be able to command authority for very long. Once more, the army would dominate and the following years would demonstrate the most vivid degeneration yet of the *pronunciamiento* from a predominantly national practice of negotiation (early 1820s), into a pretext for the physical battle for local political power.

Centralism and Civil War: The *Pronunciamientos* of 1833-1835

The *pronunciamientos* of 1833 and 1834 were essentially the centralists' attempts to regain the power which they had lost to the federalists in 1832. These two years constituted an almost mirror image of the events of 1831-1832; while the primarily local centralist *pronunciamiento* of 1833 failed, that of 1834 was a grand success, mainly because of its adhesion to the national *pronunciamiento* calling for the end of the radically federalist Valentín Gómez Farías administration. Additionally, following orders once more from brother-in-law Santa Anna, Francisco de Paula Toro was again responsible for the success of the 1834 *pronunciamiento*. This dominance of Mexican relations continued into 1835, as Toro then successfully led the *pronunciamiento* calling for centralism, something clearly against the wishes of the majority of *ligados* and *camarilleros* in the peninsula. All the *pronunciamientos* of this period thus demonstrated the undeniable importance of links between local and national political ideologies and *pronunciamientos*, and the simultaneous and separate internal factional struggle for political control which was occurring in this corner of Mexico. These *pronunciamientos* would continue to illustrate the importance of the army in ensuring their success; indeed, the military-led *pronunciamiento* of 1834 would provoke violence for the first time in independent Yucatán. This time, *pronunciados* would not use the threat of force, but outright military aggression to ensure the triumph of their movement, using the *pronunciamiento* as a precursor and a justification to excuse civil war.

In Mexico, following the end of Manuel Gómez Pedraza's constitutional term as president, elections led to Santa Anna becoming president on 1 April 1833, with Valentín

Gómez Farías as vice-president and a radical liberal congress coming into power.⁵²⁴ Santa Anna had never been a man to sit behind a desk and get bored with everyday politics (or perhaps he knew that trouble lay in store with the radical congress which had been installed); he thus withdrew to his hacienda in Veracruz, leaving Gómez Farías in charge of the national administration. Gómez Farías was then a moderate liberal, but his congress was filled with radicals, and it would be their efforts, combined with the actions of the Cosgaya administration ruling in Yucatán, which would be responsible for the next Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* just a few months later. This *pronunciamiento* would continue to demonstrate the belief that administrations brought to power through a *pronunciamiento* (i.e. by the so-called “will of the people”, even though by now it was in most cases obviously not the voice of the people responsible, but elite force) were extremely fragile, and it was feasible for *pronunciados* to attempt to bring them down through the same claimed *voluntad del pueblo* if their policies did not please a certain sector of the population.

The National Congress, determined to reverse the excessiveness of the Bustamante administration, began implementing radical liberal reforms, attempting to ensure greater suffrage, enhanced freedom of the press, and greater individual – rather than corporate – liberties.⁵²⁵ There were two main corporate bodies which were to be targeted by Congress in order to achieve this ideal of society: the army and the Roman Catholic Church,⁵²⁶ bastions of power since the colonial era, which now in liberal eyes needed to be reformed,⁵²⁷ and according to Medina Peña, more importantly, weakened. In his words, “los diputados no se proponían reformar la sociedad, sino debilitar a los dos pilares de los adversarios, el clero y el ejército, y fortalecer a las clases políticas de los estados de las cuales ellos provenían.”⁵²⁸

⁵²⁴ Costeloe, *La primera república federal*, pp.472-475.

⁵²⁵ Jaime E. Rodríguez O., “Mexico in the Age of Democratic Revolutions,” in Rodríguez O. (ed.), *Mexico in the Age*, p.11.

⁵²⁶ Costeloe, *The Central Republic*, p.34.

⁵²⁷ Santoni, *Mexicans at Arms*, p.19.

⁵²⁸ Medina Peña, *Invención del sistema*, p.218.

Furthermore, with the treasury running on empty, seizing Church property seemed like a useful source of income. With President Fariás powerless against Congress, within one month the body had managed to issue a tumultuous succession of radical proposals and measures: the national jury tried Bustamante's cabinet for the execution of Guerrero (despite their amnesty which had been established in the Treaty of Zavaleta), Congress decreed the nationalisation of the Duke of Monteleone's properties, and also granted the right of *patronato* (the power to appoint all ecclesiastical posts which was previously held by the King) to the president. The radical press also started calling for extreme measures such as the end of military and church privileges (in particular the *fueros*).⁵²⁹

The attempts to reduce the power of the Church and the army and the seizing of private property now made the clergy, the military, and the *hombres de bien* – the most powerful sectors in Mexican society – extremely uneasy. Less than two months after Congress had come into power, military opposition manifested itself in the now-established way to demonstrate dissatisfaction with an administration. Ignacio Escalada and his garrison in Morelia pronounced on 26 May 1833, demanding the assurance of the protection of the *fueros* of the Church and the army, and requesting that Santa Anna act as the protector of their cause. Santa Anna was not opposed to clerical reform (and no army reform had actually been implemented), and he consequently refused to head the *pronunciamiento*, instead condemning the rebels.⁵³⁰ Nevertheless, the *pronunciamiento* cycle had begun, and General Gabriel Durán pronounced on 1 June in Tlalpan with roughly the same demands, with the addition that Santa Anna be made “magistrado supremo” of Mexico.⁵³¹ Santa Anna, it seemed, was the magic word of the day if any *pronunciamiento* was to have a chance of success; his triumphs in 1828 and in 1832 had indeed proven that. Santa Anna once more refused the offer, but the *pronunciamiento* was essentially repeated on 8 June in the *Plan de*

⁵²⁹ Fowler, *Santa Anna*, p.146.

⁵³⁰ Ibid.

⁵³¹ <http://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/pronunciamientos/database/?f=y&id=851&m=06&y=1833>

Huejotzingo by Mariano Arista in Puebla, with the more extreme demand that Santa Anna be made supreme dictator of Mexico.⁵³² After Santa Anna refused the offer of the *pronunciamiento* once more, he was temporarily captured by Arista, before escaping and returning to Mexico City. Congress then retaliated on 23 June 1833 with the *Ley del Caso* of 23 June 1833 which decreed the expulsion of more than 50 politicians who they suspected of being against the republic.⁵³³

The temporary capture of Santa Anna along with the *pronunciamientos* against the federalist administration led to an outcry of protest in Yucatán, as the federalist *ligados* (led by Governor Cosgaya), along with Toro as commander general had an unwavering loyalty to the federalist system and Santa Anna respectively. This led to Toro pronouncing once more, this time to reiterate Yucatán's loyalty to the federation, and to express his indignation at the seizure of the president (and his brother-in-law). On 21 June 1833, the Second Active Battalion in Campeche, under Toro's command, stating that in light of the "sucesos inauditos que han turbado en la nación el orden público" and the "escandaloso arresto del supremo magistrado de los pueblos", it was necessary for them to ratify the *pronunciamiento* of November 1832, and to reiterate that no other authorities would be recognised than those which were constitutionally elected.⁵³⁴ On 24 June the First Active Battalion in Mérida seconded the act, "con motivo de los últimos sucesos con que la traición y la perfidia han puesto en conmoción a la república."⁵³⁵ Among those signing this act were those *camarilleros* who had not supported or had turned away from the Carvajal regime, such as Commander of the First Active Battalion Felipe de la Cámara, Lieutenant of the First Active Battalion Luis de Zunzuneguí, Captain of the First Active Battalion José Luis Meléndez, and

⁵³² Fowler, *Santa Anna*, p.147.

⁵³³ Ibid., p.145.

⁵³⁴ *El Fénix de la Libertad*, 9 July 1833.

⁵³⁵ Ibid., 12 August 1833.

Colonel of the First Active Battalion Juan Manuel Calderón.⁵³⁶ Nevertheless, this act also contained some closet centralists who had simply signed in order to protect themselves from opposition, important figures such as Néstor Escudero (Captain of the Cavalry Squadron) and José Julián Quijano (Commander of the same), who would be responsible for the very next *pronunciamiento* against the local Cosgaya and federal administration.

The roots of the next Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* would be mainly clerical. In 1827, with the death of the bishop of Yucatán Pedro Agustín de Esteve, his post was left vacant for occupation. The right to name ecclesiastical posts – or the *patronato* – had been previously held by the Spanish monarchy, but since independence, Mexicans had been arguing that with sovereignty, their governing institutions should be allowed to possess the *patronato*. This in itself was a problem because the Vatican had refused to recognise the independence of Mexico. Nevertheless, on 17 December 1833 the Gómez Farías administration granted this right to the civic authorities ruling Mexico; bishops would forward their lists of potential ecclesiastical post holders to the government, for the ruling authorities to choose the best contender.⁵³⁷ The vacuum left by bishop Esteve in Yucatán now meant that someone had to be nominated to occupy his position. There were then two potential candidates for the seat: José María Meneses (supported by the Liga) and José María Guerra (brother of *camarillero* leader Pedro Marcial Guerra and supported by the Camarilla). Both men represented the views of their parties, with Meneses being more radical and a supporter of liberal reform of the Church, while Guerra represented the views of the Yucatecan elite and *hombres de bien*, who believed in maintaining the respect for the Roman Catholic religion and the preservation of the colonial vestiges of power (principally the Church and the army).⁵³⁸ In 1827, the *ligados* – who were then in power – named Meneses as governor of the mitre, but the

⁵³⁶ Campos García, *De provincia*, p.283.

⁵³⁷ Michael Costeloe, *Church and State in Independent Mexico: A Study of the Patronage Debate 1821-1857* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1978), pp.134-135.

⁵³⁸ Crescencio Carrillo y Ancona, *El Obispado de Yucatán, historia de su fundación y de sus obispos* Tomo II (Mérida: Fondo Editorial de Yucatán, 1979), pp.990-992.

Carvajal regime replaced him in 1832, proposing Guerra for bishop instead.⁵³⁹ Nevertheless, the return of the Liga in late 1832 led to Local Congress declaring on 25 November 1832 that it refused to recognise Guerra as bishop (claiming that his nomination was made during the anti-constitutional government of Carvajal and was consequently invalid), and on 23 February 1833, the post was opened to candidacy once more.⁵⁴⁰ The National Congress acted in accordance, as on 16 April it refused to admit the papal bulls which had designated Guerra as bishop of Yucatán.⁵⁴¹ The Yucatecan administration then expelled Guerra to Veracruz (where he was consigned to being a simple clergyman) and named Meneses as bishop.⁵⁴²

The harmful decrees and proposals of Congress had agitated the army, the clergy and the *hombres de bien* in Yucatán, but the replacement of Guerra by Meneses as bishop was an outright insult to the Camarilla. Their outrage was more than manifest to the rest of Yucatecan society, and their sentiments were shared by the Campechean centralists who had also noted with alarm the radical tendencies of the national administration (with which the federalist *ligados* in power seemed fully intent to comply). The nervous army, the insulted clergy, the elite *camarilleros*, and the uneasy centralists thus all united under a common cause: regain local political, administrative and clerical power and halt (or reverse in some cases) the harmful decrees which were destabilising their power and hold on Yucatecan society. Principal *camarilleros* such as Lieutenant of the First Active Battalion Domingo Cantón (who was also a publisher),⁵⁴³ the Escudero brothers (Néstor who was a military figure, and Pedro who was a merchant) and politician José María Gutiérrez de Estrada joined forces with centralists Felipe Codallos (who was a member of the regular army) and priest José Mariano de Cicero. Clerical elite figures such as Vicente Solís and José María Guerra

⁵³⁹ Ibid., pp.994-996.

⁵⁴⁰ Ibid., p.1001.

⁵⁴¹ Costeloe, *La primera república*, p.374.

⁵⁴² Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, p.352.

⁵⁴³ *Sumaria instruida contra el capitán de caballería Néstor Escudero por conspiración a favor del plan de general Arista*, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Milicia, Vol.11, Exp.12, 16 October 1833.

himself (who had returned in early 1833 from Veracruz) along with other *camarillero* military elite including José Julián Quijano (Commander of the Permanent Cavalry Squadron), José Martín Calderón (Commander of Artillery), Joaquín María Mendoza (Second Lieutenant of the Third Active Battalion), Pedro de la Cámara (Captain of the First Active Battalion), and José Julián Aquilano (member of the Permanent Cavalry) also joined in, disgusted with Congress' intentions to “acabar con el Ejército.”⁵⁴⁴ Many *hombres de bien* such as businessmen and factional political leaders Pedro Marcial Guerra and Pedro Manuel de Regil were not to be left out of the coalition, which was given the name La Rochela, a title derived from the family nucleus of the Escudero de la Rochas.⁵⁴⁵

Meetings were quickly organised among the *rochelistas* to discuss the possibility of – according to *ligado* infiltrator and spy José María Torreblanca – “secundar el pronunciamiento de los traidores Escalada, Durán y Arista.”⁵⁴⁶ The *Ley del Caso* intensified the need to pronounce as among those decreed to be expelled were the Escudero brothers, Castellanos, Carvajal, Gutiérrez de Estrada, Codallos and Marcial Guerra.⁵⁴⁷ López, informed of the *pronunciamiento* plans, ordered sections of the First Active Battalion to enter into service to smother any spark of revolt. With Mérida under guard, Juan Gómez Hinojosa – Colonel of Artillery – who had assumed leadership of the planned *pronunciamiento de adhesión*, transferred to Campeche in order to “agenciar el pronunciamiento” of Arista and to save the “sagrada causa de la Independencia” (in his words).⁵⁴⁸ On 7 September, he and his fellow military officers Francisco Javier Verna (Colonel of Artillery), Pablo Antonio Lenard

⁵⁴⁴ *Extracto de las diligencias indagatorias de conspiración practicadas por la parte militar, cuyo expediente se acompaña en testimonio*, AGN, Gobernación. Sin Sección, Caja 167, Exp.7, Mérida, 3 January 1834.

⁵⁴⁵ Los verdaderos federalistas, *Al público yucateco* (Mérida, Yucatán: Imprenta de Lorenzo Seguí, 2 November 1833), Biblioteca Nacional, Colección Lafragua 490.

⁵⁴⁶ *Extracto de las diligencias [...] 3 January 1834*; Los verdaderos federalistas, *Al público yucateco*, 2 November 1833.

⁵⁴⁷ Costeloe, *La primera república*, p.392; *Extracto de las diligencias [...] 3 January 1834*; Los verdaderos federalistas, *Al público yucateco*, 2 November 1833.

⁵⁴⁸ Letter from Juan Gómez Hinojosa to the *Juez de Distrito*, *Correspondencia del ayuntamiento de Campeche con el Comandante General del Estado, julio – noviembre 1833*, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Correspondencia Oficial, Vol.3, Exp.14.

(of the Second Active Battalion and former *patriota campechano*), politician Blas Vallardes, and clerical member José Clemente Ortega, assuming the name of Junta Libertadora Num.14, seconded the *pronunciamiento* of Arista (it should be noted that Verna had actually participated in the federalist *junta de Guerra* of 13 July 1831 against Carvajal and for reunification with Yucatán). Just as in previous military *pronunciamientos*, the *pronunciados*, ignoring the fact that they were the elite of society and that their movement was serving purely their interests, claimed to be the saviours of the nation as they rescued the *patria* from ills which its peoples did not wish to suffer (as Carvajal had done in 1829, and Toro in 1832). This was only bolstered by the title of the *pronunciamiento* “Viva la Religión y el Ejército”, as the act denounced the “destrucción de nuestra Religión y del benemérito Ejército” stating that its purpose was of course to “salvar la cara patria.”⁵⁴⁹

Similar to the plan of Arista, the plan demanded the maintenance of the military and religious *fueros*. Nevertheless, there was no call for Santa Anna to be dictator as Arista had declared, but instead he was heavily criticised, condemned as a “hipócrita” who was “escudado con la observancia de la Constitución y de las leyes” with “parricidas miras a la destrucción de nuestra santa religión y el benemérito ejército.”⁵⁵⁰ Even though Santa Anna had nothing to do with the radical proposals of Congress (indeed he had been in Veracruz in his hacienda all this time), the military *camarilleros* and the centralists had not forgotten his direction of the Toro-headed *pronunciamiento* of 1832 which had ultimately paved the way for the Liga to regain local power. The plan instead proposed that the dictator of Mexico would be elected by the state congresses which the *pronunciados* of 1832 had deposed. This dictator would hold the right of the *patronato*, and would be responsible for assigning Yucatecan ecclesiastical posts, as well as naming the governing administrations for the regions. *Pronunciados* once more combined local demands with national rhetoric, as they

⁵⁴⁹ Dos Yucatecos, *Conspiración Descubierta* (Mérida, Yucatán: Imprenta de Lorenzo Segui, Calle de del Flamenco, 1833), AGN, Gobernación, Sin Sección, Caja 167, Exp.7.

⁵⁵⁰ Ibid.

demanded the imprisonment of Toro, Cosgaya and Méndez (the commander of arms, governor and vice-governor respectively); just as in 1829, *pronunciados* were using the practice to not only implement but justify unlawful and borderline authoritarian measures. They also tacked on the local demand of naming of José María Guerra as bishop of Yucatán.⁵⁵¹ This *pronunciamiento de adhesión* to that of Arista consequently resulted in only having one thing in common with the original: the protection of the *fueros* of the army and the Church. The *pronunciados* had adapted every other decree to local desires. Although it seems that local *pronunciados* had hijacked a nationally oriented *pronunciamiento* to give their own local movement strength and validity, it must be noted that their *pronunciamiento de adhesión* still had a distinct connection to the centralist ideology permeating throughout Mexico. Consequently, one should refrain from viewing this *pronunciamiento* as a mere local power grab, which used a national *pronunciamiento* as an excuse. It should also be taken into account that these *pronunciados* had clear centralist ideals which they were determined to enforce and protect.

In Mérida, the news of the Campechean *pronunciamiento* brought joy among the centralist conspirators. News was slow moving due to the severe outbreak of cholera plaguing the region; on 5 October, almost a month later, Domingo Cantón came to *ligado* spy Torreblanca's house, "dando saltos de alegría diciendo: 'Venga un abrazo mi amigo ya Campeche se pronunció a favor de Arista [...] es menester que hagamos lo mismo [...] vámonos a pronunciar ahora mismo.'" Pedro de la Cámara who was present then asked "¿Y cómo nos pronunciamos?" with Cantón replying "que no tuviese cuidado que todo se vencería" as he explained that they had the support of sufficient army forces.⁵⁵² This was a clear manifestation that by now, many knew that popular opinion was not the force behind the success of a Yucatecan *pronunciamiento*, but military strength was. Nevertheless, the

⁵⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵⁵² *Extracto de las diligencias [...] 3 January 1834.*

pronunciamiento was never realised; spy Torreblanca had quickly informed the López administration of the plans, with Joaquín Muñoz and Felipe de la Cámara and their battalion in Mérida disarming and arresting all the potential *pronunciados* before they could put their plans into action. Meanwhile, Toro had apprehended the principal *pronunciados* in Campeche. Governor López then decreed the expulsion of all *pronunciados* and potential *pronunciados*, denouncing them as “fautores unos y otros principales promovedores del plan exterminador que con criminalidad inaudita quisieron plantear en nuestro estado prevalidos de sus posiciones militares y con engaños de sostener sus fueros, así como los de la iglesia.”⁵⁵³ When Cosgaya took over the governorship in October, he revoked the decision to expel all the potential *pronunciados*, with the exception of Verna, due to “insufficient evidence.”⁵⁵⁴ It is possible that he was well aware that a decree as radical as expulsion would only provoke further opposition among the centralists, and he was simply attempting to keep the peace.

The *pronunciamiento* was thus developing an interesting trend with regard to both *pronunciamiento* rhetoric, as well as the reaction of the ruling administrations which the *pronunciados* targeted. The same *ligado pronunciados* of 1832 were now condemning the current *pronunciados* (coincidentally members of their opposing faction the centralists/*camarilleros*) as disruptive agents of chaos. These same *ligados* had nevertheless called themselves the saviours of Yucatán when *they* had pronounced in 1832; apparently, a *pronunciamiento* was only something positive when *you* were the one pronouncing, not being pronounced against. Similarly, the centralist *pronunciados* in this instance were condemning the local government for being despotic and tyrannical, disregarding the fact that they themselves had been the oppressive regime in 1829. In the words of Ortega y Gasset, in

⁵⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁴ José Tiburcio López, *De que se publique un decreto del congreso estatal*, CAIHY, Impresos, V.1833.040, 25 September 1833; *El Gobernador del Estado de Yucatán a sus habitantes sabed: que el Congreso ha decretado lo siguiente*, AGN, Gobernación, Sin Sección, Caja 167, Exp.15, Mérida, 10 January 1834.

reference to the opposition of the *pronunciados*, “¿Y los demás, los que no coincidían de antemano con él? ¡Ah! Esos no existían, y si existían, eran unos precitos. En vez de atraerlos, persuadirlos o corregirlos, lo urgente era excluirlos, eliminarlos, distanciarlos, trazando una mágica línea entre los buenos y los malos.”⁵⁵⁵ The *pronunciamiento* and the rhetoric which surrounded it had thus established a standard which was to be followed in nineteenth-century Yucatán and Mexico: *pronunciados* were viewed by themselves as beneficial; convinced of their cause, a *pronunciamiento* was something necessary to save society from the ills of a harmful administration. Yet when these same *pronunciados* gained political power, they deemed any *pronunciamiento* against them as a destabilising and negative, unnecessary force.

In Mexico, with Santa Anna repressing the *pronunciamientos* of Escalada, Durán and Arista, the National Congress, having grown in confidence, began issuing more radical decrees. On 18 October it ordered the auction of the goods of the Philippine missionaries, with the abolition of the tithe decreed on 27 October. On 3 November, it annulled the federal law of 16 May 1831, and consequently all cathedral chapter appointments which had been made since then. As noted, on 17 December National Congress decided that state governors would name all clerics.⁵⁵⁶ The decrees against the Church continued into February 1834, as Congress approved a bill forcing the Church to auction its nonessential property in order to fill the desperately low treasury.⁵⁵⁷ In Yucatán, Cosgaya bolstered the attack on the Church decreeing that ecclesiastical members were no longer allowed to interfere in political matters as they contributed to the “perversión de las conciencias [...] para sublevar a los súbditos contra las autoridades políticas.”⁵⁵⁸

⁵⁵⁵ Ortega y Gasset, *España invertebrada*, pp.90-91.

⁵⁵⁶ Charles W. Macune, Jr., “The Impact of Federalism on Mexican Church-State Relations, 1824-1835: The Case of the State of Mexico”, *The Americas*, Vol.40, No.4 (Apr. 1984), p.516.

⁵⁵⁷ Ibid.; Rodríguez O., “Mexico in the Age of Democratic Revolutions”, p.11; Frank N. Samponaro, “La alianza de Santa Anna y los federalistas 1832-1834: su formación y desintegración”, *Historia Mexicana*, Vol.30, No.3 (Jan. - Mar., 1981), p.379.

⁵⁵⁸ Juan de Dios Cosgaya, *Decreto al estado*, CAIHY, Impresos, V.1833.061, 30 November 1833.

Bishops reacted throughout Mexico against the delegation of the *patronato* to the State, arguing that it was an Episcopal, and not a civil right.⁵⁵⁹ Despite the clergy's outrage, there was no official movement against the Farías administration. This was largely due to Santa Anna's refusal to head any movement against him; Santa Anna had no opposition to taxing the Church in order to fund the treasury (and consequently the army); in fact, he "sympathised" with it, according to Fowler.⁵⁶⁰ There was in his opinion no official reason to halt Congress yet; but he was nevertheless becoming uneasy about the increasingly radical decrees being ordered. He was an advocator of reform, but not as rapid or extreme as Congress was trying to achieve. Frank Samponaro has pointed out that the alliance between Santa Anna – a moderate liberal – and the radical federalists in 1832 "fue básicamente un acuerdo de conveniencia [...] No compartían principios políticos."⁵⁶¹ Additionally, he was not unaware of the growing opposition of the *hombres de bien*, the traditionalist elite, and the religious popular classes to National Congress.⁵⁶² Unless the brakes were applied, he would soon be forced to take action. He thus returned to the presidency in October 1833 to temporarily take over the reins.

This period would mark the turning point of Santa Anna, and would consequently dictate the events in Mexico for the next year. Congress now began to push not only for ecclesiastic, but also military reforms. This was one thing that Santa Anna, a military man himself – and whose support base consisted of key figures in the regular army – did not want; he believed in preserving the power of the army. In order to pacify both Congress and the national army, on 16 December – with the help of his advisor and Minister of War José María Tornel – he proposed his own moderate military reforms: the reduction of the regular army from 12 to 10 battalions and from 12 to 6 regiments, and the abolition of the mounted

⁵⁵⁹ Bishops such as Juan Cayetano Portugal of Michoacán, and the bishops of Monterrey, Durango and Guadalajara all protested. See Costeloe, *Church and State*, p.136.

⁵⁶⁰ Fowler, *Santa Anna*, p.144.

⁵⁶¹ Samponaro, "La alianza", p.369.

⁵⁶² Fowler, *Santa Anna*, p.152.

artillery brigade. There could now only be 8 generals and 12 brigadiers in the entire regular army.⁵⁶³ Congress accepted the reforms, but upon Santa Anna's departure from Mexico City once more at the end of 1833, they reassumed their own radical measures. In early 1834, they proposed more extreme reductions to the regular army and increases in the state civic militias, with the latter to instead be responsible for internal security. They proposed to halve the 12 regular battalions of infantry, reducing the regiments of cavalry from 12 to 10. Additionally, they would also abolish the artillery brigade and the general commandancies.⁵⁶⁴ Santa Anna was more than unimpressed with Congress' disregard of his proposals and its attack on the army; on 12 March he wrote to Farías cautioning him on the disrespect of his authority and ordering restraint.⁵⁶⁵ One should note that Santa Anna did not want the opposition of 1828, 29 and 32 to return to power. He was a liberal federalist republican, and had been heavily opposed to the Bustamante administration's policies. The radicalism of Congress and the proposals to reduce the army nonetheless meant that he now had to do something before a revolt erupted against the administration.⁵⁶⁶ On 22 April 1834, Santa Anna travelled to the capital, and there was no doubt of his intentions; on 24 April he forced the resignation of Gómez Farías,⁵⁶⁷ and Minister of War José María Tornel then began to plan the end of the Farías administration.

In Yucatán, Commander General Francisco de Paula Toro, never far behind his brother-in-law, was sure to once more mirror the actions taken by Santa Anna on a local level. Toro had not appreciated the decrees which had attempted to reduce the army (in particular the proposal of the abolition of his own post), which the Cosgaya administration had heartily supported. Indeed, the local government had dissolved the squadron of cavalry in

⁵⁶³ Ibid., p.145.

⁵⁶⁴ Samponaro, "La alianza", pp.376-377.

⁵⁶⁵ Fowler, *Santa Anna*, p.153.

⁵⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁷ Samponaro, "La alianza", p.381.

Mérida,⁵⁶⁸ and had ordered increases in the civic militias stationed in Mérida, Izamal, and Motul.⁵⁶⁹ Santa Anna had once more been maintaining a correspondence with Toro, this time concerning the establishment of a formal opposition (which of course would manifest itself in a *pronunciamiento*) against the Farías and Cosgaya administrations.⁵⁷⁰ Toro now began to take measures to prepare for the *pronunciamiento* which would lead to the downfall of the Cosgaya administration, and hopefully simultaneously contribute to the national call for the dissolution of National Congress. At the end of April 1834, Lieutenant Colonel Marcial Aguirre, military adjutant to Santa Anna, arrived in Campeche from Veracruz with a sizeable force, and entered into talks with Toro and the other principal *pronunciados* of 1829.⁵⁷¹ Following the assurance from Aguirre that Santa Anna was indeed about to start a *pronunciamiento*, “con el objeto de echar abajo al partido de los sansculotes” which made up National Congress, Toro was in.⁵⁷²

The commander began to make extensive preparations for his own local *pronunciamiento*. He worked on gathering the full support of the military, as he instructed the distribution of “millares de pasquines” with “vivas y fueras opuestos,”⁵⁷³ along with the newspaper of the opposition, *El Mosquito*, among the army and the active battalions.⁵⁷⁴ The regular army then began to speak publicly of the “inmediata variación del actual sistema, bajo el velo de sostener al ejército y al clero,” wearing red ribbons “en los sombreros como distintivo del centralismo.”⁵⁷⁵ Toro also began to take military action. He supplied the

⁵⁶⁸ Campos García, *De provincia*, p.313.

⁵⁶⁹ *Decreto de Basilio María de Argáiz*, CAIHY, Impresos, V.1833.045, 9 October 1833.

⁵⁷⁰ Waldeck believed that Santa Anna had sown disorder in Yucatán through his brother-in-law Toro because “codiciaba el dominio de la península como refugio en caso de que no lograra sea Coronado emperador de México.” See Federico Waldeck, *Viaje pintoresco y arqueológico a la provincia de Yucatán* (Mérida: Carlos R. Menéndez, 1930), pp.23, 32, 34, 49.

⁵⁷¹ Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, p.344; Juan de Dios Cosgaya to the Commander General, AGEY, Libro Complementario 7, *Correspondencia de los gobernadores del 17 de enero de 1833 al 29 de Julio de 1834*, 31 May and 19 June 1834.

⁵⁷² *Ibid.*, 10 May 1834.

⁵⁷³ *Ibid.*, 19 June 1834.

⁵⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 10 May 1834.

⁵⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 19 June 1834.

Thirteenth Permanent Battalion (now known as the Galeana Battalion) and the Second Active Battalion (stationed in Campeche) with war material.⁵⁷⁶ He ordered his adjutant José María Covián to occupy Sisal and prevent the arrival of Colonel Martín Peraza, who had been sent by President Farías (in an emergency counteractive measure) as the new commander of the Galeana Battalion.⁵⁷⁷ With the local artillery in Sisal presenting considerable opposition to Covián, claiming “que era llegada la época de sostener las instituciones federales,”⁵⁷⁸ Toro then ordered Captain of the Permanent Infantry and temporary Commander of Arms of Sisal Eulogio Rosado to Campeche (where he would be imprisoned).⁵⁷⁹ He subsequently sent Second Lieutenant José del Carmen Bello to command and supervise the detachment of the Battalion of Artillery in Mérida in order to transfer it to Maxcanú. He doubled the war ammunitions of the companies of the *camino real*, and ordered Felipe de la Cámara, Commander of the First Active Battalion to hand over command to Gerónimo López de Llergo⁵⁸⁰ and then called for all the sergeants of the First Active Battalion to meet in Mérida.⁵⁸¹ Finally, he seized the ammunition of the civic militias, and ordered the Commander of Cavalry Joaquín Muñoz to the Campechean prison, with Felipe Montero as his replacement.⁵⁸²

The local administration was more than alarmed at Toro's unsupervised and unilateral actions. After Governor Cosgaya continually asked Toro for an explanation for his behaviour, Toro eventually replied, declaring, “Mi amigo, ahora es tiempo de la chismografía, y si usted hace caso de ella [...] no faltarán esos movimientos sospechosos en esa y en otros

⁵⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁸ Ibid., 13 and 15 May 1834.

⁵⁷⁹ Ibid., 19 June 1834.

⁵⁸⁰ Letter from the Colonel of the National Body of Artillery Felipe Montero to the Governor, in *ibid.*, 10 June 1834.

⁵⁸¹ Joaquín Muñoz to the Governor, in *ibid.*, 28 May 1834; Juan de Dios Cosgaya to the Commander of the First Active Battalion, in *ibid.*, 19 June 1834.

⁵⁸² Juan de Dios Cosgaya to the Commander General, in *ibid.*, 19 June 1834.

partidos.”⁵⁸³ Of course no one believed him, and in a heated altercation on 7 May with Vice-Governor Santiago Méndez, Toro boasted that he would end the local government and congress “tan pronto como le llegase una noticia que esperaba” of the president, and he was not intimidated by the civic militias, claiming that “con cuatro soldados y un cabo la acabaría.”⁵⁸⁴ He then declared to Cosgaya that being a soldier, he would always be subordinate to the will of the president of the republic, and that he would support Santa Anna if a *pronunciamiento* was about to begin.⁵⁸⁵ Cosgaya, panicked, ordered the Commander of Sisal (Rosado) to keep his position and segregate it from the authority of the general command. He also ordered Muñoz in Mérida to remain where he was stationed.⁵⁸⁶

Cosgaya subsequently unleashed a tirade at Toro for his actions, accusing him of operating “de acuerdo con su cuñado” to grow the “germen de la rebelión” in Yucatán and thus “sobreponerse a la soberanía del estado.” He was criticised for encouraging among the garrison of Campeche and the *pronunciados* of 1829 the idea of the “resurrección del centralismo,”⁵⁸⁷ thus fomenting “un ataque al sistema federal y a la soberanía del estado, quizá más cruel que el del mes de noviembre del año de 29.”⁵⁸⁸ Cosgaya denounced Toro for influencing the people to think that “tienen derecho no solo a desconocer, sino a deponer al jefe que los manda,”⁵⁸⁹ (even though this is exactly what had happened in 1832 when the *ligados* had supported Toro’s movement). Cosgaya then condemned Toro’s replacement of the “jefes adictos al federalismo” by the commander general’s own men.⁵⁹⁰ He additionally criticised Toro for the supervised distribution of *El Mosquito*, a paper which, according to Cosgaya, “ataca las instituciones federales, pone en ridículo a los supremos poderes de la

⁵⁸³ General Toro to Governor Cosgaya, in *ibid.*, 10 May 1834.

⁵⁸⁴ Juan de Dios Cosgaya to the Commander General, in *ibid.*, 19 June and 3 May 1834.

⁵⁸⁵ General Toro to Governor Cosgaya, in *ibid.*, 15 June 1834.

⁵⁸⁶ Juan de Dios Cosgaya to the Military Commander of Sisal Eulogio Rosado, to the Commander of the Third Active Battalion and to the Commander of the Barracks of Mérida, in *ibid.*, 30 May 1834.

⁵⁸⁷ Juan de Dios Cosgaya to the Commander General, Mérida, in *ibid.*, 19 June 1834.

⁵⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹⁰ *El Procurador del pueblo*, 15 June 1834.

nación, insulta las soberanías de los estados.”⁵⁹¹ So enraged was Cosgaya that the ugly Mérida-Campeche divide of the 1820s flared up once more in his rhetoric, as he denounced that:

Sr Toro y media docena de hijos espurios de la patria [...] existe en el oprimido Campeche. Aquel pueblo, digno de la mejor suerte, es sobre quien más inmediatamente pesan los actos despóticos de un mando militar, escandaloso y arbitrario [...] el juego, la disipación y el enriquecerse a toda costa, son y han sido los exclusivos objetos de que se ha ocupado.⁵⁹²

Cosgaya ended with the call that “federación o muerte han proclamado los estados [...] al fin el triunfo será del pueblo.”⁵⁹³ Congress then issued a *proclama* to the state, bolstering Cosgaya’s claims that Toro “se trata revivir en nuestro suelo los acontecimientos criminales y escandalosos del año de 1829 [...] enteramente destructivas del actual orden de cosas.”⁵⁹⁴

Cosgaya’s and Local Congress’ reprobation of Toro was just the beginning; now the authorities fell back on the fail safe option: a *pronunciamiento*. For the first time in Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* history, the plan had not even the slightest pretext of having a national cause. On 30 May 1834, the local authorities (including economic, ecclesiastical and administrative figures), and some members of the active battalions, taking into account “las disposiciones hostiles que el Sr Comandante general D Francisco de Paula Toro intentaba poner en ejecución contra la soberanía del pueblo y sus instituciones,” demonstrated by placing in Mérida “oficiales cuyas ideas [...] están en oposición diametral con las de los dignos jefes de esta guarnición” and seizing the ammunition of the civic militias, decided that it was time to “desconocer al Comandante general.” Cosgaya, Meneses, senator José Luis Lavalle, former Interim Governor Basilio María de Argaiz, Alderman Simón de Vargas, Commander of Arms Joaquín Muñoz, José Tiburcio López, Felipe de la Cámara, politician

⁵⁹¹ Ibid.

⁵⁹² Ibid.

⁵⁹³ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁴ José María Quiñones, José Canuto Vela, Tomas Ruiz, *Manifiesto que el A. Congreso del Estado Libre y Soberano de Yucatán hace a los Supremos Poderes de la Nación y de los otros Estados. Mérida de Yucatán* (Mérida, Yucatán: Imprenta de L. Seguí, calle del Flamenco, 4 June 1834), British Library, *Papeles Varios* No.8.

Joaquín García Rejón and Commander of the First Active Battalion Eusebio Molina (who had actually been arrested after his *pronunciamiento* against Carvajal on 4 June 1831) were among the most important figures signing the act.⁵⁹⁵ Cosgaya then issued a *manifiesto* to the state on 31 May declaring the actions of Toro had implied “una emergencia política,” and this measure was necessary for the “conservación de la libertad federal.”⁵⁹⁶ Congress supported him with its own statement that:

su [Toro] pretensión no es otra que quitar á los Poderes del Estado todos los recursos con que felizmente cuentan para sostener su soberanía y dejarlos indefensos, despojando a los que los ocupan de los puestos a que han sido elevados por la Constitución y el voto general de los pueblos.⁵⁹⁷

The ruling administrations had thus (ironically) used a *pronunciamiento* to officially denounce future opposing *pronunciados* as agents of instability; indeed, now even the authorities in power were issuing a *pronunciamiento* to counteract a potential opposing *pronunciamiento*. A simple decree would not have worked as the local government had no constitutional power over the appointment and dismissal of commander generals; these figures were controlled by the national government. They consequently had to issue *pronunciamiento* (anti-constitutionally), in order to protect the constitution from dangerous opponents. The First and Third Active Battalions, the Permanent Cavalry, the Infantry, the local Cavalry, and the garrison in Sisal all quickly seconded the *pronunciamiento*.⁵⁹⁸ On 31 May Local Congress granted the governor the power to arm forces and to punish those who were trying to disturb public order. *Pronunciados* had again used the practice to depose an

⁵⁹⁵ *Resultado de la Junta general celebrada en la capital del Estado de Yucatán sobre medidas de seguridad y sostenimiento de las instituciones federales* (Mérida, Yucatán: Imprenta de L. Seguí, calle del Flameco, 30 May 1834), Archivo Municipal de Guadalajara, Impresos, 1834.021.

⁵⁹⁶ Juan de Dios Cosgaya, *Manifiesto: El Gobernador del Estado libre y soberano de Yucatán, a sus habitantes* (Mérida, Yucatán: Imprenta Yucateca de Espinosa, 30 May 1834), Archivo Municipal de Guadalajara, Impresos, 1834.035.

⁵⁹⁷ Juan de Dios Cosgaya, *Mensaje Del Excmo. Sr. Gobernador del Estado libre y soberano de Yucatán D. Juan de Dios Cosgaya, al tiempo de abrir sus sesiones extraordinarias la séptima Legislatura constitucional el día 1 de Junio de 1834* (Mérida, Yucatán: Imprenta de L. Seguí, calle de Flamenco, 1 June 1834), British Library, *Papeles Varios* No.8.

⁵⁹⁸ *Acta celebrada por la Guarnición de Mérida* (Mérida, Yucatán: Imprenta de Lorenzo Seguí, calle del Flamenco, 1 June 1834), Archivo Municipal de Guadalajara, Impresos, 1834.039; *Actas de la Milicia Local* (de Infantería; de Caballería) (Mérida, Yucatán: Imprenta dirigida por José Ortiz, 2 June 1834), Archivo Municipal de Guadalajara, Impresos, 1834.040; *El Procurador del pueblo*, 15 June 1834.

individual (as in 1829 and 1832), no doubt learning from the Plan of Perote in 1828. Moreover, this *pronunciamiento* was purely local; there was only the desperation to maintain the federalist system and *ligado* political power in Yucatán.

This *pronunciamiento* had yet another novelty to it: it was about to inspire civil war for the first time in nineteenth-century Yucatán, thus mirroring on a smaller scale the events of the *Plan de Veracruz* in 1832 in Mexico. Toro, enraged at the *pronunciamiento* of 30 May, began to prepare his forces for war, seizing the profits in the state treasury, and arming and moving the permanent Galeana Battalion and units of the First and Second Active Battalions (commanded by brothers Gerónimo and Sebastián López de Llergo respectively) to Hecelchakán.⁵⁹⁹ In defence, Commander (and former Yucatecan governor) José Tiburcio López and the Inspector of local militias Felipe de Jesús Montero ordered the civic militias (stationed in Tixkokob, Izamal and other towns) to Mérida, to march to Hecelchakán.⁶⁰⁰ Toro then strategically pretended to withdraw his troops to Campeche, leaving in Hecelchakán a fraction of his forces commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Sebastián López de Llergo. In Hecelchakán, the unsuspecting Meridian troops arrived on 29 June, and there was bloody war for more than 8 hours, in which Llergo triumphed.⁶⁰¹ A *pronunciamiento* had, for the first time in Yucatán, spiralled out of control, causing blood to run.

Meanwhile, the news which Toro had been waiting on arrived; Tornel had organised a successful *pronunciamiento* by the garrison of Cuernavaca on 25 May protesting against National Congress, calling for revocation of all its radical decrees, and for the protection of the privileges of the Church and the army. The *pronunciados* gave Santa Anna leadership of the movement, and it was inspiring *pronunciamientos de adhesión* across the nation.⁶⁰²

⁵⁹⁹ Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, p.346.

⁶⁰⁰ Juan de Dios Cosgaya to Commander José Tiburcio López, AGEY, Libro Complementario 7, *Correspondencia de los gobernadores del 17 de enero de 1833 al 29 de Julio de 1834*, 19 June 1834.

⁶⁰¹ Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, pp.347-348; Baranda, *Recordaciones*, p.221; Aznar Barbachano and Carbó, *Memoria*, p.48.

⁶⁰² Anna, *Forging*, p.260; Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, p.343.

Moreover, Santa Anna ordered Toro on 25 June to arrest López and the principal heads of the resistance in Yucatán.⁶⁰³ Civil war was temporarily suspended for Toro and his troops to issue their own *pronunciamiento* on 5 July. Signed by members of the regular army, the Second Active Battalion, the Campechean *ayuntamiento*, and clerical figures such as Justo Vargas, Vicente Méndez and José María Regil, the text condemned the local government for being “una facción desafecta a la unión nacional.” The government’s implementation of radical reforms and its refusal to recognise Toro as commander general had proven to the *pronunciados* that the Cosgaya administration was operating “exclusiva no de la voluntad de los pueblos” and thus “excediendo los límites de las facultades constitucionales.” The government had thus violated “los inalienables derechos de su [el pueblo] soberanía.” Typical *pronunciamiento* rhetoric: the *pronunciados* were now the saviours, and the government was the tyrannical administration which the *pronunciados* had no choice but to remove.⁶⁰⁴

The *pronunciados* thus demanded the revocation of all religious reforms taken since 1832 and declared the cease of recognition of all local authorities, along with anyone who had supported the act of 30 May. They reinstated the congress of October 1832, named *jefe político* of Campeche Rafael Montalvo y Baranda as temporary governor, and granted José María Guerra the position of bishop of Yucatán. Finally, in anticipation of protest, the *pronunciados* declared that their faction “desconocerá todo pronunciamiento que se niega en este Estado.”⁶⁰⁵ Noticeably, there was absolutely no mention of the Plan of Cuernavaca, nor any protest against National Congress; indeed, although the move was ordered by Santa Anna, the *pronunciamiento* itself was purely local, a retaliation by Toro directed against the Cosgaya administration. Nevertheless, there was still national ideology present, as the

⁶⁰³ Letter from Pedro Sainz de Baranda to Tomás Lujan, *alcalde primero* of Mérida, 15 January 1835 (according to Baranda, the order of the president was dated 25 June 1834), AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Gobernación, Vol.7, Exp.15.

⁶⁰⁴ *Correspondencia del gobierno dirigida al Ayuntamiento de Mérida*, 19 June 1834, CAIHY, Cartas, XXVII.1834.1/2.002.

⁶⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

objective of the *pronunciados* was to reverse the radical decrees of federalism and defend their centralist interests.

This *pronunciamiento* led to the resumption of civil war, with Toro's supporters determined to crush any resistance from the federalists. Toro ordered Nicolás de la Portilla to head the vanguard of the Campechean forces, and Sebastián López de Llergo (Llergo was a professional switcher of *pronunciamientos*, he had supported Carvajal's *pronunciamiento* in 1829, had then taken part in the junta de Guerra of 13 July 1831 against the same Carvajal, and was now supporting centralist Toro) to command those of the centre, directing them to Calkiní. Toro, in charge of the reserve forces, remained in Campeche. On Cosgaya's side, Eduardo Vadillo led the Third Active Battalion camping in Calkiní with 300 men. While awaiting reinforcements from some of the First Active Battalion (commanded by Francisco Peraza) on 26 July, the Campechean army of 1500 men attacked and defeated Vadillo and his forces, wounding him and taking him prisoner. The victorious troops of Toro advanced on the capital, with the federalist authorities fleeing to Izamal in the east on 27 July. A great number of Meridian civilians also left, paying no heed to Llergo's declaration that they would be safe if they obeyed his orders. Once more, the Commander General had easily conquered the governor through the practice of the *pronunciamiento*, along with civil war this time; civilian rule was no contest for military force.⁶⁰⁶

The *pronunciados* occupied Mérida without resistance, as their carriages rolled in with their flags emblazoned with "¡Viva Santa Anna! ¡Viva la religión!" They re-established the deposed Local Congress of 1832, with Toro of course assuming the position of governor.⁶⁰⁷ The *pronunciados* – or "agentes de tiranía"⁶⁰⁸ as they were called by the opposition – went beyond the boundaries of their text and the orders of Santa Anna, expelling

⁶⁰⁶ Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, pp.350-353.

⁶⁰⁷ Ibid., p.351.

⁶⁰⁸ *Correspondencia del gobierno dirigida al ayuntamiento de Mérida*, CAIHY, Cartas, XXVII. 1834. ½.002, 18 July 1834.

federalists Governor Juan de Dios Cosgaya, Vice-Governor Santiago Méndez, and Eduardo Vadillo from Yucatán, and imprisoning others. José María Meneses (the federalist-nominated bishop) took to hiding in the east, and federalist and former governor José Tiburcio López fled to Belize.⁶⁰⁹ The 1829 and 1832 *pronunciamientos* had succeeded through the threats of the violence of the army, but now triumph had been ensured through outright battle and repression. In the space of 12 years, the *pronunciamiento* had degenerated from a peaceful form of negotiation into a pretext for war in the local political battle between Mérida and Campeche and federalists and centralists. In the words of Pani, “Because its [the *pronunciamiento*’s] success depended on strength – whether it was actually used or not –, it reinforced the importance and the autonomy of those wielding armed force [...] [and] it unhinged those politicians bent on consolidating a modern liberal nation-state.”⁶¹⁰ One of the most original intentions of the *pronunciamiento* – to avoid violence through negotiation – was gone; in this instance it served the opposite pretext of provoking violence, of *justifying* it. Indeed, Báquer has stated that “El pronunciamiento nace en una situación entendida como mala, por anárquica, y promete otra mejor en evitación de la guerra civil,”⁶¹¹ asserting that “el derramamiento de sangre era, en la técnica de los clásicos pronunciamientos, un accidente abominable.”⁶¹² Additionally, according to Josèp Fontana, the *pronunciamiento*, which had originally been a Spanish “fórmula alternativa a la de una revolución con participación directa de las masas urbanas y campesinas” carried out by “liberales europeos [...] que no deseaban la repetición de una guerra civil como la vivida en Francia”⁶¹³ had now evolved into simply another way of excusing military force, all under the justifiable phrase which was dominating early nineteenth-century Mexico: the “derecho de insurrección.”

The bloody civil war and the punishment of the federalists had warned all other towns

⁶⁰⁹ Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, p.352; Baranda, *Recordaciones*, p.226.

⁶¹⁰ Pani, “Intervention and Empire: Politics as Usual?” (in press).

⁶¹¹ Báquer, *El modelo español*, p.39; Fontana, “Prólogo”, p.ix.

⁶¹² Báquer, *El modelo español*, p.19.

⁶¹³ Fontana, “Prólogo”, p.ix.

of the potential situation in the case of protest against the *pronunciamiento*. After Toro signed the decree granting Campeche the title of “heroica” for supporting the institutions “contra el gobierno demagógico” of the reformists,⁶¹⁴ the *pronunciamiento* was seconded throughout the region. In Valladolid the troops adhered, flying white flags with blue fringes with the logos “Morir con honor por Santa Anna y Religión”, and “¡Viva Santa Anna! ¡Viva la Religión!”⁶¹⁵ On 3 August, the *ayuntamiento* of Mérida seconded the *pronunciamiento*, with centralists Domingo Cantón, José Guzmán (son of Pedro), Benito Aznar, Manuel Carvajal (brother of José Segundo), Joaquín Castellanos, and Vicente Solís all signing.⁶¹⁶ Realising the impending region-wide success of the *pronunciamiento*, federalists who had actually signed the *pronunciamiento* which had ceased to recognise Toro earlier that year – such as José Antonio Zorrilla, Manuel José Espejo, Domingo López Somoza, Domingo Campos and Joaquín García Rejón – also signed the adhesion to Toro’s act. Throughout July and August, the *ayuntamientos* of Peto, Tekax,⁶¹⁷ Izamal, Conkal, Uman, Maxcanú, Villa del Carmen, Ticul,⁶¹⁸ Xul,⁶¹⁹ Valladolid, Cenotillo, Kaua, Dzitás⁶²⁰ and Caucel all seconded the *pronunciamiento*. Toro then issued a *proclama* ironically declaring “me congratulo en haber contribuido destrozando el imperio de los tiranos que habían sofocado la soberanía y libertades públicas.”⁶²¹ Through the success of their *pronunciamiento*, Toro and his supporters thus became representative of Yucatecan sentiment, despite the heavy federalist presence in the region. In the words of Pani:

⁶¹⁴ Campos García, “La política yucateca”, p.549.

⁶¹⁵ Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, p.351.

⁶¹⁶ Campos García, *Que los yucatecos*, p.104.

⁶¹⁷ *Acta del ayuntamiento de Tekax secundando el pronunciamiento del Ayuntamiento de Campeche del 5 de julio de 1834*, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Ayuntamientos, Vol.3, Exp.20, 3 August 1834.

⁶¹⁸ *Oficios del pueblo de Ticul, secundado el pronunciamiento del Ayuntamiento de Campeche del 5 de julio de 1834*, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Ayuntamientos, Vol.3, Exp.18, 2 August 1834.

⁶¹⁹ *Copia del acta de la junta municipal del pueblo de Xul, secundado el pronunciamiento del Ayuntamiento de Campeche del 5 de julio de 1834*, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Ayuntamientos, Vol.3, Exp.19, 3 August 1834.

⁶²⁰ *Copias certificadas de las actas de los ayuntamientos de Valladolid, Cenotillo, Kaua y Dzitás, secundado el pronunciamiento hecho en Campeche el 5 de julio de 1834*, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Ayuntamientos, Vol.3, Exp.21, 13 August 1834.

⁶²¹ *Correspondencia del gobierno del estado y prefectura política*, CAIHY, Cartas, XXIX, 1837. ½. 004, 14 August 1834.

Faced with a context in which the rule of law was absent [...] and where it was customary to employ violence to achieve political aims, the regional military warlords became the channel through which the relationship between society and the national and state levels of government was articulated. They were, in essence, political-military operators of a kind.⁶²²

Despite the violence of the military *pronunciados*, this is not to say that the exercise was exclusively militaristic. The *pronunciados* – who were also in their majority political and financial actors – had been heavily motivated by a centralist ideology, and had a tangible fear that radical federalism would harm their economic, clerical, and social security. This was thus not a case of military actors intervening in politics and causing extensive chaos; it was essentially a clashing of federalist and centralist political factions, who had both chosen to defend their ideologies through using armed force which was available to them. As Medina Peña has highlighted:

el primer ejército de México independiente fue reorganizado y dirigido por parte de la clase política de origen miliciano. Esta fracción de la clase política nacional veía su corporación como una institución plenamente legitimada para participar en política porque había jugado un papel central en la consumación de la independencia nacional [...] en el imaginario político de esos años, la fortaleza en el ejército iba de la mano con la idea de un gobierno nacional también fuerte y consolidado [...] Así pues, el ejército nacional es un actor político que en aquel escenario solo tenía a su disposición el pronunciamiento, el plan y la revuelta como formas de acción política y corporativa.⁶²³

Moreover, one should note that this use of arms was an exception in the Yucatecan case; for almost 15 years, the military had been pronouncing in Yucatán without ever resorting to violence. One should therefore be cautious in using this *pronunciamiento* as an example for Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* typology.

The *pronunciados* carried out manipulated elections in order to give the customary constitutional gloss to the unlawful overtake of power. The new congress was installed on 6 November, and on 7 November Francisco de Paula Toro became governor, with Pedro Sainz de Baranda elected as vice governor. On 25 July José María Guerra became bishop of

⁶²² Pani, “Intervention and Empire: Politics as Usual?” (in press).

⁶²³ Medina Peña, *Invención del sistema*, p.244.

Yucatán.⁶²⁴ The *pronunciados* then waited once more for events in Mexico in order to take the next step. Throughout the summer of 1834, Santa Anna ensured the fulfilment of the Plan of Cuernavaca, annulling the majority of decrees of the previous congress, with the exception of the abolition of the tithe. Elections were held for a new national congress in autumn 1834, and with *pronunciados* deposing the federalists in almost every state, the centralists and the *hombres de bien* prevailed, meeting on 4 January 1835 for the first time.⁶²⁵ In Yucatán, centralists Néstor Escudero, Pedro Marcial Guerra, Gerónimo López de Llergo, José Quijano, and Tomás Requeña were elected to represent Yucatán.⁶²⁶ On 28 January, Santa Anna named Miguel Barragán as interim president, and he would rule for the next year.⁶²⁷

There was a general consensus among the *hombres de bien* in National Congress that federalism was not the system best suited to the needs of the country. Eleven years of federalism had witnessed the forceful overthrow of the presidencies of Gómez Pedraza, Guerrero, Bustamante, and Gómez Farías through *pronunciamientos*.⁶²⁸ In their opinion, *pronunciamientos* were constantly destabilising society, deposing and replacing local and national authorities. They blamed federalism for causing political and factional rivalries, the general breakdown of law and order, the empowering of the masses and the states, the critical economic situation, and the weakening of the Church and morality. Federalism had also permitted the over-empowerment of the regions through the fortification of the civic militias in a “frenzy of provincialism”. Regional leaders had lost sight of the duty of obedience which they owed to national authority, refusing outright to obey national decrees and threatening secession (and even seceding – Yucatán was a case in point). There was no hope of progress, and the existence of the Republic itself was in danger. In the words of Costeloe, “fortunes,

⁶²⁴ Crescencio Carrillo y Ancona, *El obispado de Yucatán* Tomo II, pp.1009-1010.

⁶²⁵ Samponaro, “La alianza”, pp.383-384.

⁶²⁶ Campos García, *Que los yucatecos*, p.105.

⁶²⁷ Fowler, *Santa Anna*, p.157.

⁶²⁸ Fowler, *Mexico in the Age*, p.64.

properties, individual freedom, public morality, law, religion, everything had been destroyed.”⁶²⁹

Change therefore had to be made at the root of the problem; Mexicans needed a modification of the political system, one which limited suffrage, curtailed the autonomy of the regions, ensured the respect of the Catholic religion, restored law and order and political stability, ended factional warring, and provoked economic growth and social progress.⁶³⁰ Centralism was clearly the answer; all these things could only be ensured if the upper social classes and the centre exclusively held political power, with all domains and regions under the strong control of the *hombres de bien*.⁶³¹ In March 1835, the new congress thus approved a motion to amend the 1824 constitution, with the intention to introduce a centralist republic.

An avalanche of *pronunciamientos* across the country then started calling *en masse* for a centralist regime, and Yucatán was no exception; the coalition which had come to power as a result of Toro’s *pronunciamiento* had privileges and interests to maintain and protect. On 22 June, the *ayuntamiento* of Campeche (with centralists Norberto López de Llergo, Alejandro Duque de Estrada and Leandro Poblaciones ruling) constituted the first *pronunciados* of that year to call for a centralist system (demonstrating once more the Campechean centralist tendencies which had been illustrated in the 1821, 1824 and 1829 *pronunciamientos*). They admitted in their act that “en abstracto todas las instituciones liberales son buenas, pero la mejor en general puede ser perniciosa a un pueblo determinado,” and the federal institutions “cubiertos con su manto engañoso” had caused a “serie continua de trastornos, sacudimientos, turbulencias y guerras civiles.” They consequently called for a popular, representative centralist government as “la unión concentrando las fuerzas, da vigor y enérgica preponderancia” could be the only reliable and secure type of government.⁶³² They

⁶²⁹ Costeloe, *The Central Republic*, p.58.

⁶³⁰ Anna, *Forging*, p.263.

⁶³¹ Costeloe, *The Central Republic*, p.30.

⁶³² <http://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/pronunciamientos/database/index.php?f=y&id=58&m=06&y=1835>

also stipulated that Santa Anna was to be president. The *ayuntamiento* of Mérida seconded the *pronunciamiento* on 25 June, stating that a “larga y dolorosa experiencia” had demonstrated that “el actual sistema que nos rige no es el más conforme y adaptable a la nación mexicana” as in Yucatán particularly it had caused “el continuo choque de los bandos y partidos para sobreponerse unos a otros.”⁶³³ These *pronunciados* made sure to retain political power as they stated that they would continue to rule locally even in the case of the change of the national political system.

The rest of the region seconded the plan of Campeche, with juntas in Valladolid,⁶³⁴ Sisal, Seibaplaya, Villa del Carmen, Hool, Calkiní, Cauich, Hecelchakán, and Kopomá all supporting the call for centralism.⁶³⁵ It is important to note the influence which the powerful *pronunciados* in the principal cities had on the smaller *ayuntamientos* in terms of commandeering support; regardless of whether the members of these *ayuntamientos* were federalist or centralist, the fact remained that it was pointless for them to even try to resist the *pronunciamiento* wave (and the military force which was reinforcing it) which was washing over the peninsula. This had been the case for every single *pronunciamiento* so far; the *ayuntamientos* merely played the role of passive supporters of the larger movements which were dictated by the elite military and political figures in the two main cities of Mérida and Campeche. Thus, according to Rugeley:

In some ways, for the southeast *ayuntamientos* every pronouncement came from without [...] For that reason, *ayuntamiento* secondings have to be taken with considerable scepticism [...] pueblo adhesions were necessary to reassure political actors that what they were doing was somehow legitimate [...] precisely because their legitimacy was so dubious.⁶³⁶

⁶³³ <http://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/pronunciamientos/database/index.php?f=y&id=61&m=06&y=1835>

⁶³⁴ *Copia del acta del Ayuntamiento de Valladolid, dando su voto para el establecimiento del sistema central*, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Gobernación, Vol.6, Exp.26, 30 June 1835.

⁶³⁵ These *pronunciamiento* texts can be found on the database website of Will Fowler’s *pronunciamiento* project at the University of St. Andrews.

⁶³⁶ Rugeley, “The Compass Points of Unrest” (in press).

Approximately 400 *pronunciamientos* supporting centralism were issued throughout Mexico between May and October 1835. On 9 September, National Congress declared that it was now invested with the powers needed to create a new constitution. Meanwhile, in late 1835, centralists Pedro Escudero de la Rocha, Vicente Solís, José Luis de Meléndez, Joaquín Calixto Gil, and priest Manuel José Pardío constituted the *junta departamental* which was to rule Yucatán.⁶³⁷ On 3 October, National Congress decreed that states were to be converted into departments, with limited fiscal and administrative autonomy; additionally, the national administration was to appoint departmental governors. On 23 October, future conservatives Manuel Sánchez de Tagle, Lucas Alamán, and Carlos María de Bustamante in the Chamber of Deputies created a provisional centralist constitution. It consisted of further measures such as restricting suffrage to men who had a minimum annual income of 100 pesos.⁶³⁸ On 30 December 1836, National Congress accepted the constitution, henceforth known as the *Siete Leyes*.

The *pronunciamientos* which had erupted between 1833 and 1835 in Yucatán were undeniably destabilizing practices, provoking the unconstitutional change of administration once more, and inspiring Yucatecan civil war for the first time since independence. Indeed, these *pronunciamientos*, while being national exercises, were simultaneously local political tools, as the *pronunciamientos* from 1833-1834 had objectives of removing state power from the ruling authorities. In fact, only the *pronunciamiento* of 1835 did not involve dismissing governing bodies (and individuals) from power. The dominance of the use of military power in political matters also became apparent; *pronunciados* had forgotten one of the original reasons behind the *pronunciamiento* – the avoidance of violence and disorder – as they used the *pronunciamiento* of 1834 to provoke, preempt, and justify civil war. This is not to say that the practice lacked ideological basis or political aim. Instead, the *pronunciamiento* illustrated

⁶³⁷ Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, p.356; Negrín Muñoz, *Campeche: una historia*, p.47.

⁶³⁸ Santoni, *Mexicans at Arms*, p.20; Fowler, *Santa Anna*, pp.155; 162.

factions which were deeply committed to the defense of their ideologies and the protection of their interests. Proclaiming either federalism or centralism in the *pronunciamiento* was no coincidence; they were real ideals and ideas which these groups took seriously, and were prepared to take whatever measures necessary in order to defend them.

Finally, the founding of institutions through *pronunciamientos* based on “public opinion” had demonstratively led to the extreme fragility of institutional order and the “crisis de legitimidad” in both Mexico and Yucatán during this period; if it was accepted to establish an administration based on the *voluntad del pueblo*, then the “will of the people” could just as legitimately replace it whenever *pronunciados* desired. Whatever the case was, it remains that by the early 1830s, the *pronunciamiento* was seen as the solution to all political and administrative worries in the two main cities of the peninsula; it was now the established and accepted way to get things done by the elite of Mérida and Campeche. It is evident that the most significant *pronunciamientos* throughout independence had until now been restricted to these two main cities; nevertheless, the men of eastern Yucatán had not been unaware of these *pronunciamientos*, and they would wait, watch, and learn. The next and largest *pronunciamiento* in the history of Yucatán was soon to hit the peninsula, and it would be by the landowner and captain of the Third Active Battalion from the east: Santiago Imán.

The Forgotten Hero: The Santiago Imán *Pronunciamiento* of 1836-1840

Perhaps a revolution can overthrow autocratic despotism and profiteering or power-grabbing oppression, but it can never truly reform a manner of thinking; instead, new prejudices, just like the old ones they replace, will serve as a leash for the great unthinking mass.⁶³⁹

Revolución: Movimiento político que ilusiona a muchos, desilusiona a más, incomoda a casi todos y enriquece extraordinariamente a unos pocos. Goza de firme prestigio.⁶⁴⁰

The *pronunciamiento* of Santiago Imán was the most significant and exceptional *pronunciamiento* in Yucatecan history. This *pronunciamiento* was the epitome of the fluctuating relations which existed between the Yucatecan and Mexican authorities during the early nineteenth century, as it was the only *pronunciamiento* which resulted in Yucatán's complete independence from Mexico, with Yucatán creating its own constitution (the 1829 *pronunciamiento* had only brought about Yucatán's conditional secession from Mexico, but not the province's independence). Nevertheless, the *pronunciamiento*'s initial origins would not stem from separatist desires, but would arise from the discontent of the military, or more specifically, the Third Active Battalion which was stationed in towns throughout the remote east of the peninsula (the battalion to which Imán belonged). This *pronunciamiento* thus highlighted the now defined importance which had developed throughout the 1830s with regard to the military's role in inspiring and realising the *pronunciamiento*. Furthermore, the majority of those participating in Imán's *pronunciamiento* were middle-class military

⁶³⁹ Immanuel Kant, "An Answer to the Question: "What is Enlightenment?" (Königsberg in Prussia: 1784).

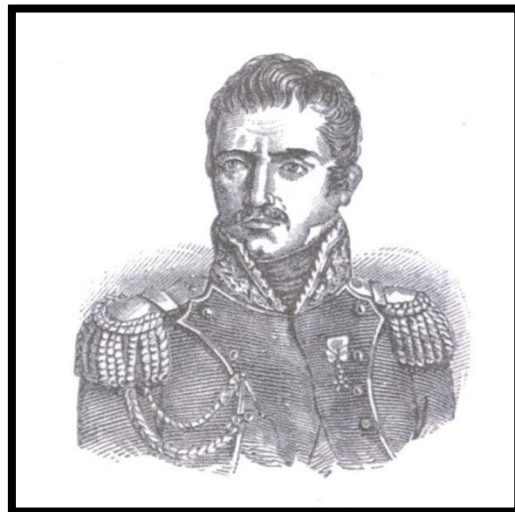
⁶⁴⁰ Adolfo Bioy Casares, *Descanso de caminantes: diarios íntimos* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 2001), p.39.

officers, *campesinos* and Mayas from the east of the peninsula, endowing it with an unmistakable element of popular participation which had evidently been absent in the previous Yucatecan *pronunciamientos* (where the elite from the cities of Mérida and Campeche had lobbied for regional political power). The elite federalists in Mérida would nevertheless be responsible for seconding the *pronunciamiento* and would consequently ensure its region-wide success, emphasising the everlasting significance of the role of these politicians in the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento*. These federalists did not just second Imán's *pronunciamiento*, but hijacked it and recreated it to serve their own elite purposes, thus highlighting the continued and determined dominance which they had when it came to controlling *pronunciamientos* (and consequently political power). The adaptation from a relatively popular movement to an exclusive *pronunciamiento* and the elites' disregard of the demands of the *pueblo* would lead to a final significant factor: the curious way in which *pronunciamientos* in Yucatán were memorialised. There was a determination by the federalist elite to forget the inexperienced and dangerous figure of Imán as a *pronunciamiento* leader, as he was a virtually unknown man from the east who had dangerously armed the Maya. Yet simultaneously, there was a conscious elite effort to recognise and remember his *pronunciamiento* as the Yucatecan prototype of the perfect *pronunciamiento*: one representing the people and the voice of the *pueblos*, which endowed it with the legitimacy needed to justify the federalists overthrowing the centralist governing administrations at the time.

Before analysing Imán's *pronunciamiento*, it is useful to briefly examine this unlikely *pronunciamiento* figure. Who was Santiago Imán and why did he feel compelled to pronounce against all odds? Born in 1800, Santiago Imán Villafañá was from a family who had achieved certain importance in the Maya-dominated east of the peninsula (a place known as the *oriente*), and more specifically in the towns of Tizimín and Espita. The Imán family

was relatively wealthy, owning many properties, with investments in the dyewood industry and maintaining a trade with Havana. More importantly, Imán was an army officer: as early as 1825, he is found in documents gathering men from Tizimín to form the then-newly established Third Active Battalion, soon becoming Captain of its Fifth Company.⁶⁴¹ He also had a penchant for pronouncing; he had seconded the *pronunciamientos* for the federal constitution in 1824, and again in 1832. When his time for leading the biggest Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* came, he already had more than a decade of military experience, and was practised in the art of seconding *pronunciamientos*.

Santiago Imán



Source: John Frost, *An Illuminated History of North America: From the Earliest Period to the Present Time...with a Complete History of the United States* (New York: Henry Bill, 1854), p.110.

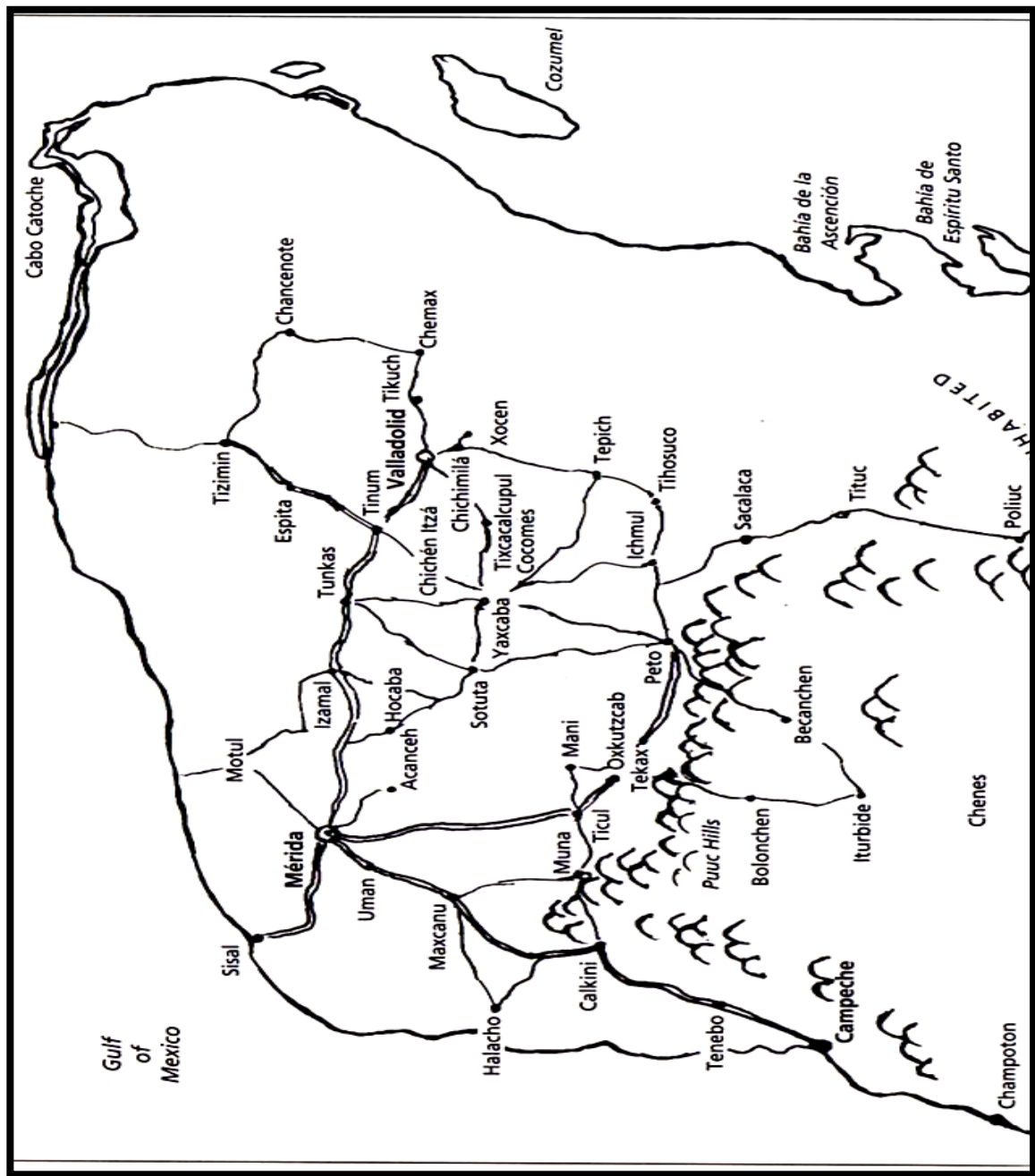
Yet Imán was not a political figure, unlike the majority of the military men in the cities of Mérida and Campeche. His main reason for pronouncing was not to be politically related, but was much more concrete (once more contrasting with the traditional political *pronunciamientos* of early nineteenth-century Yucatán). From as early as December 1835, the Mexican administration's *sorteo* method of compulsory recruitment of Yucatecan soldiers

⁶⁴¹ Terry Rugeley, "En busca de Santiago Imán", Unicornio: Suplemento Cultural de *Por Esto!*, 21 February 1999, p.3.

to fight the wars against secessionist Texas had begun. The *sorteo* had specifically targeted the Third Active Battalion – of which Imán was a member – whose soldiers were stationed mainly in the eastern towns of Tizimín, Espita, and Izamal, and in the city of Valladolid in the east (see Map 2).⁶⁴² In total, then-Commander General Joaquín Rivas Zayas reported that more than 3,000 Yucatecan troops were sent to Texas between 1835 and 1839. The *sorteo* solely affected the *criollo* sector (which constituted only one-third of the Yucatecan population), as laws had until then forbidden the Maya to enlist in the active battalions.⁶⁴³

⁶⁴² The correspondence with regard to the details of the *sorteo* is extensive. For primary source information see: *Correspondencia de la junta departamental de Yucatán con el gobernador*, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Correspondencia Oficial, Vol.6, Exp.9, 22 April 1837; *Copiador de la correspondencia del gobernador con autoridades de Tekax*, AGEY, Libro Complementario 11, 21 October 1837; Letter from José María Rivas Chacón to the Governor, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Correspondencia Oficial, Vol.7, Exp.3, 11 April 1838; Letter from Pedro de Baranda to the Governor, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Correspondencia Oficial, Vol.7, Exp.4, 17 April 1838; *Copiador de la correspondencia del gobernador con autoridades de Izamal*, AGEY, Libro Complementario 10, 11 May 1838; *Filiaciones de reclutas de la compañía de cazadores del tercer batallón activo de Yucatán, 1826-1838*, AGEY, Milicia, Vol.3, Exp.24, May 1838; Letter from José Patricio Iturralde and Juan J. Ramírez to the Governor, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Correspondencia Oficial, Vol.7, Exp.4, 6 November 1838.

⁶⁴³ Letter from Joaquín Rivas Zayas to President Bustamante, 25 August 1839, in Baqueiro, *Ensayo Histórico*, pp.266-270.



Map 2: Yucatán

Source: Nelson Reed, *The Caste War of Yucatán* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 2002), p.22.

The *sorteo* recruitment had several disastrous effects on Yucatecan society. The constitution of the Third Active Battalion was unlike that of the First and Second Active Battalions. The Iturbide administration had created the latter in 1821, taking members from the regular army to form this “reserve” army. These soldiers thus had some sort of training,

and although their occupations became more focused in other domains (economic and political), they nonetheless had some military experience. On the other hand, the Yucatecan administration had created the Third Active Battalion in 1824, and the majority of its members had never been part of the regular army. They were civilians for the most part, and the local government had offered them positions to maintain the peace of the towns in the east of the region. The Third Active Battalion was thus made up of labourers or aged and inexperienced *vecinos* in their majority (Imán himself was an *hacendado* with no military training). These men were consequently not trained or equipped to fight a war; according to then-Commander General Joaquín Rivas Zayas:

Por la exigencia de sus costumbres y por la peculiar situación de la gente de que se componen los cuerpos [...] los batallones de esta clase están formados de artesanos y labradores, casados generalmente y establecidos en sus respectivos pueblos, de donde solo se les saca para el servicio en un caso extraordinario.⁶⁴⁴

His opinion was echoed throughout the east of the region, as the *prefecto* of Izamal, Justo María Burgos argued that these soldiers were only used to “cuidar el cuartel [...] [para la] conservación del orden, en custodiar caudales del erario público a esa capital, y en conducir presos.”⁶⁴⁵ *Criollos* also protested against the *sorteo* in Sucopó,⁶⁴⁶ Motul,⁶⁴⁷ Tema, Valladolid, Espita, Tizimín,⁶⁴⁸ and even Mérida, where the members of that *ayuntamiento* pointed out that the law of 1767 stated that the Mexican administration should only recruit these battalions (according to their character of “reserve army”) if the regular army was otherwise occupied; in Campeche there was still stationed the fully able national Veteran and Galeana Battalions.⁶⁴⁹

⁶⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁵ Letters from Justo María Burgos to the Governor, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Correspondencia Oficial, Vol.7, Exp.3, 2 and 14 April 1838.

⁶⁴⁶ Letter from Bernabé Varuna to the Subprefect of Valladolid, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Correspondencia Oficial, Vol.7, Exp.4, 30 March 1838.

⁶⁴⁷ Letter from Victoriano Moreno to the Prefect of Izamal, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Correspondencia Oficial, Vol.7, Exp.3, 9 April 1838.

⁶⁴⁸ AGEY, Libro Complementario 10, *Copiador de la correspondencia del gobernador con autoridades de Izamal*, 21 April 1838.

⁶⁴⁹ Campos García, *Que los yucatecos*, p.154.

Aside from the obvious reason that these troops did not want to leave their homelands to fight in distant wars, another cause for dissent was that the uprooting of these “*artesanos y labradores*” had a detrimental effect on the industry and agriculture of the eastern regions. *Hacendados* and business owners were thus equally as disgusted as those who were being recruited, as *criollo* elites from Izamal and Valladolid complained of the decline in production, commerce, and industry, and asked the government to exempt their labourers from the *sorteo*.⁶⁵⁰ Pedro Baranda, Subprefect of Valladolid and owner of *La Aurora Yucateca* – a cotton factory located in Valladolid – denounced “la sentencia de exterminio” afflicting the region, as “habiendo sido arrancados de la agricultura los pocos brazos que la fomentaban que colocarlos en la milicia activa [...] la industria se encuentra en una retrogradación tan triste como lamentable.”⁶⁵¹ The hundreds who had fled the troop recruitment, going to either live in the mountains, or even escaping as far as Belize, were equally useless to Yucatecan society. Baranda estimated the loss to be “en cada partido doscientos o trescientos hombres, que emigrarán a los campos desiertos y a los establecimientos ingleses de Walix [Belize] [...] para librarse del sorteo,”⁶⁵² with Rivas Zayas claiming the numbers to be “en quinientos los prófugos en los montes y perdidos para la sociedad.”⁶⁵³

How did this affect Imán more directly? Imán was heavily preoccupied about the draining of his own workforce by the forced recruitment; indeed, his employees were all members of the Third Active Battalion, targeted for enlistment to Texas. Commanding a company of 124 men, he used his position to manage a sufficient labour force, as soldiers

⁶⁵⁰ AGEY, Libro Complementario 8, *Copiador de la correspondencia del gobernador con autoridades de Valladolid*, 19 March 1838.

⁶⁵¹ Letter from Pedro de Baranda to the Governor, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Correspondencia Oficial, Vol.7, Exp.4, 1 April 1838.

⁶⁵² Letter from Pedro de Baranda to the Governor, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Correspondencia Oficial, Vol.7, Exp.4, 14 April 1838.

⁶⁵³ Letter from Joaquín Rivas Zayas to President Bustamante, 25 August 1839.

repaid money which he loaned to them by working in his cornfields.⁶⁵⁴ With the national government ordering his men to Texas, there was no one to tend to Imán's lands, and military authorities ignored his complaints about the "incalculables perjuicios, porque pasada la época en que las milpas deben quemarse."⁶⁵⁵ Of equal significance was the fact that he was now also a captain of a regiment destined for Texas. His previously respected military position (pre-1836) now became unpopular, as he had the villainous responsibility of gathering his very troops for the far-away war. When on 6 June 1836, Governor Francisco de Paula Toro demanded a further two hundred soldiers from the Third Active Battalion to go to Tamaulipas, Imán knew it was time to pronounce.⁶⁵⁶

Imán was not alone; he had allies in important Yucatecan cities, namely Mérida and Campeche, where the concerns were not about the *sorteo*, but lay among the pro-federalist elite who were looking for a way to topple the central government which had replaced them in 1835. These federalists were namely José Tiburcio López, Juan de Dios Cosgaya (both former *ligados* and governors), newcomers to politics Manuel and Miguel Barbachano, and former *camarilleros* Benito Aznar, the Llergo brothers (Sebastián and Manuel), Santiago Mendez, José Encarnacion Cámara, and the Gutiérrez de Estrada family. Indeed, it is significant to note that in response to the centralist coalition of Francisco del Paula Toro and the chief members of the La Rochela faction – such as Pedro and Néstor Escudero, Vicente Solís and Joaquín Calixto Gil – the majority of the Camarilla and the entire Liga had united to form a large federalist coalition called the Unión.⁶⁵⁷ The federalist presence in the main cities was thus still a very strong factor to contend with.

⁶⁵⁴ Letter from Santiago Imán to Francisco de Paula Toro, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Milicia, Vol.1, Exp.13, 19 April 1836.

⁶⁵⁵ Letter from *ibid.* to *ibid.*, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Milicia, Vol.13, Exp.11, 5 April 1836.

⁶⁵⁶ Rugeley, *Rebellion now and forever: Mayas, Hispanics, and caste war violence in Yucatán, 1800-1880* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2009), p.40.

⁶⁵⁷ Campos García, *Que los yucatecos*, p.114.

In order to gather support for his *pronunciamiento*, Imán consequently planned to pronounce in the name of federalism. One should note that this was not the main objective of Imán: his demands were economic and militaristic, not political. He was nevertheless aware that the military elite in Mérida and Campeche had always had political rather than militaristic objectives in their *pronunciamientos* (as has been demonstrated). As a result, Imán needed to broaden the aims of his act so as to incorporate the ideological interests of the elite in the West, thus increasing his *pronunciamiento*'s appeal to the most important members of society who could potentially adhere to his cause. To pronounce for the end of the *sorteo* or the dissolution of the Third Active Battalion could not garner nearly enough endorsement or mobilisation, or amass the core constituent support which he needed in order to give his *pronunciamiento* a chance of success. He was also aware that until then, the principal Yucatecan *pronunciamientos* had been realised among the political and military elite of Mérida and Campeche. No one from the east – much less a mere captain with no political experience – had carried out a major successful *pronunciamiento*. He consequently needed the support of the powerful *pronunciado* elite in Mérida and Campeche in order to inspire the domino effect of the *pronunciamiento*, and thus create opportunities for its victory.

Imán's inclusion of federalism was not only to garner adhesion from the federalists in Mérida and Campeche, but he also needed a political/ideological slant in order to give his cause some sort of legitimacy. He had to follow the standard *pronunciamiento* rhetoric that his *pronunciamiento* could save the nation from the evils of a despotic regime, as previous *pronunciamientos* had done. Significantly, centralist Tomás Requeña would later remark that Imán's *pronunciamiento* did not have political origins in spite of invoking the federal constitution "como una de tantas palabras mágicas usadas en tales ocasiones"; he recognised that the problem was located in the extraction of troops in the east of the republic, and that

Imán was using federalism to acquire support as well as grant validity to his movement.⁶⁵⁸ Thus, in the words of Van Young, “some political crises begin to look invented, almost conspiratorial”⁶⁵⁹ in contexts such as this. One should note that this was an exception in the standard Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* typology: all *pronunciados* previous to this had possessed a genuine political ideology and had formulated *pronunciamientos* to implement or protect their political beliefs. Imán, despite having much more concrete objectives, consequently still had to give the impression that he was following in the footsteps of the traditional *pronunciados*.

The Imán *pronunciamiento* therefore undeniably began as an elite movement; Imán himself was a *criollo* and of the provincial upper-class in the east, a respected figure in Tizimín society, and his main reason for pronouncing was because his workers and soldiers were being taken away from him. The federalist taint of the *pronunciamiento* was also elitist; it was included in order to persuade the political upper crust of Mérida and Campeche to protest against a government which had issued a series of damaging property and business taxes, along with harmful trade decrees and tariffs, affecting their businesses and hacienda production. The call for the end of the *sorteo* would nevertheless not only be serving the needs of the elite, but would also unintentionally be satisfying the demands of the lower classes; indeed, the majority of those protesting against being sent to Texas were the hacienda and industry workers. Imán would add a further element of popularity to the *pronunciamiento* when, in the need for manpower in his exercise, he would include demands in his movement which answered the needs of the indigenous sectors, in order to encourage them to take up arms with him. Imán would thus widen the objectives of his *pronunciamiento*, encompassing

⁶⁵⁸ Tomás Requeña to the Commander General, AGN, Gobernación, Sin Sección, Caja 249, Exp.18, 11 January 1840.

⁶⁵⁹ Eric Van Young, “Of Tempests and Teapots: Imperial Crisis and Local Conflicts in Mexico at the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century”, in Elisa Servín, Leticia Reina & John Tutino (eds.), *Cycles of Conflict, Centuries of Change: Crisis, Reform, and Revolution in Mexico* (Duke University Press: Durham and London, 2007), p.49.

the needs of several sectors of society, and consequently transforming it into a popular movement, as shall be discovered.

Imán's first attempt at pronouncing has been recorded as early as June 1836, when after hearing the news that Santa Anna's army had been defeated by U.S. troops – resulting in the capture of the Mexican president – the 36-year old Imán pronounced. His endeavour, referred to as “el pronunciamiento intentado por el capitán D Santiago Imán,”⁶⁶⁰ was quickly discovered and quashed, ending in his capture by centralist Colonel and Commander in Chief of the Third Active Battalion, Roberto Ildefonso Rivas, on 29 June 1836.⁶⁶¹ A local jury then tried Imán on a “causa de sedición”⁶⁶² and imprisoned him. In jail, without proper food or shelter, Imán's resentment against his circumstances only deepened, strengthening his determination to pronounce. After two years in prison, authorities released him in the custody of a herb doctor (following his plea that his haemorrhoids were giving him too much trouble), and with his “salud en absoluta decadencia.”⁶⁶³

Upon his release, the rebel established his revolutionary headquarters – named the *cuartel general del libertador del Oriente* – in a secret location in the east, and recommenced planning with the Meridian and Campechean federalists.⁶⁶⁴ They agreed that he, along with others in “Sisal y en los pueblos del Camino de Real de Campeche”⁶⁶⁵ would all simultaneously pronounce on 29 May 1839, so as to cause a nationwide *pronunciamiento*, far from the control and watchful eye of the repressive centralist governor and former *camarillero* Pedro Marcial Guerra. One should note that while the federalists had attempted to protest through civilian *pronunciamientos* (without any threat of violence) throughout the

⁶⁶⁰ Francisco de Paula Toro to the Colonel of the Third Active Battalion, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Milicia, Vol.13, Exp.13, 4 October 1836 .

⁶⁶¹ Ibid., 29 June 1836.

⁶⁶² Ibid., 16 July 1836.

⁶⁶³ *Fragmento de una representación promovida por Don Santiago Imán oficial del Batallón Tercero Activo, preso por conspiración, solicitando su libertad bajo fianza por estar enfermo*, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Justicia, Vol.4, Exp.14, 18 February 1837; Letter from Santiago Imán to the Commander of the Third Active Battalion, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Milicia, Vol.12, Exp.23, 7 February 1837.

⁶⁶⁴ Rugeley, *Rebellion now and forever*, p.1.

⁶⁶⁵ Felipe de la Cámara y Zavala, *Memorias* (Place Unpubl., 1836-1841), p.37.

end of 1837 and beginning of 1838,⁶⁶⁶ Governor Guerra had quickly repressed them.⁶⁶⁷ This had led to the federalists' realisation of two key strategies: if the *pronunciamiento* was to succeed, it had to be away from the main cities, and it had to include a military threat.

Due to constant bickering among the federalists on how to proceed with the planned *pronunciamiento* – “en disputas interminables se iba pasando el tiempo sin adelanto”⁶⁶⁸ – they decided to cancel their plans at the last minute. Either Imán did not get word of the cancellation, or he proceeded anyway in his audacious manner. On 29 May, eight of his armed men appeared at the house of Rivas in Espita. The men brought a letter from Imán himself, dated the 19th of that month, and addressed from his headquarters, in which he invited Rivas to take part in “el grito glorioso de la libertad,” asking that he provide soldiers and arms as soon as possible. He assured him that he had 400 supporters, including the majority of San Fernando Aké (a black community originally formed by refugees of the

⁶⁶⁶ On 24 December 1837 the *junta departamental* of Mérida seconded the *pronunciamiento* issued by the *junta departamental* of Durango, requesting the reformation and subsequent implementation of the federal constitution of 1824. The *pronunciamiento* was subsequently seconded by the *ayuntamientos* of Mérida, Peto, Campeche, Tekax, Espita, Bacalar and Valladolid. See: “Acuerdo del 19 de diciembre de 1837, Año de 1837”, in *Acuerdos del respetable ayuntamiento de esta capital desde 19 de junio hasta diciembre del mismo año*, CAIHY; *Acta del Ayuntamiento de Peto cabecera de partido*, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Gobernación, Vol.10, Exp.34, 24 December 1837; Juan Pablo Talavera to Benito Aznar, interim governor of Yucatán, AGEY, Gobernación, Vol.10, Exp.34, 25 December 1837; *Correspondencia del gobierno del estado y prefectura política*, CAIHY, Manuscritos, XXIX. 1837. ½. 004, 28 and 30 December 1837; *Acta de Tekax*, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Gobernación, Vol.10, Exp.39, 29 December 1837; *Acta de Espita*, 29 December 1837, and Pedro de Baranda and Juan J. Ramírez to the Secretary General, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Gobernación, Vol.10, Exp.39, 2 January 1838; *La Luz*, 6 January 1838; Letter from Joaquín Calixto Gil to the Governor, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Gobernación, Vol.10, Exp.39, 22 January 1838; *Copiador de la correspondencia del gobernador con autoridades de Tekax*, AGEY, Libro Complementario 11, 10 March 1838.

⁶⁶⁷ Guerra had federalists Pedro Casares y Armas, Simón Vargas and Joaquín Cetina removed from the *ayuntamiento* of Mérida (see AGEY, Libro Complementario 12, *Copiador de la correspondencia del gobernador con autoridades de Mérida*, 15 December 1838). He also ordered the dissolution of the *ayuntamiento* of Espita on 5 January 1838 (see Guerra to the Tribunal Superior, Mérida 4 January 1838, and Tomás O' Horán to the governor, Mérida, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Gobernación, Vol.10, Exp.39, 5 January 1838). The *pronunciamientos* were condemned by him as “obra de unos pocos descontentos, enemigos del orden y triunfo de la intriga sobre el candor y la imprevisión [...] ni menos puede ser el voto general de los pueblos.” (See: *Copia del expediente formado por el gobernador del departamento de Yucatán, para consultar a la junta departamental de México, sobre la representación de los ayuntamientos de Espita y Tekax, pidiendo el restablecimiento de la Constitución de 1824*, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Gobernación, Vol.10, Exp.39, 5 January 1838.

⁶⁶⁸ De la Cámara, *Memorias*, p.55.

Haitian revolution of 1791). In a similar letter, Imán proclaimed himself in favour of the federal republic and called on interested parties to take up arms with him.⁶⁶⁹

Why Imán advised and invited a clear centralist rival (and moreover the very same figure who had arrested him two years earlier when he had attempted to pronounce for federalism) to uphold his *pronunciamiento* demonstrates one dynamic aspect of the *pronunciamiento* in nineteenth-century Yucatán (and Mexico). In many cases *pronunciamientos* had the ability to incorporate self-proclaimed federalists or centralists into the rival or opposing faction, as long as these supporters were guaranteed to be on the more powerful side. In several cases, there were *chaqueteros* who switched factions, joining the group with a winning *pronunciamiento* in order to ensure their political survival; these were evident cases of opportunism. Examples were *pronunciamiento* leader Sebastián López de Llergo who was centralist in 1829, but federalist in 1832, centralist again in 1834, and was now federalist; self-proclaimed centralist Governor Pedro Marcial Guerra was himself a former *camarillero* who had plotted for Yucatecan independence from Mexico several times, and had simply rode on the victorious centralist wave in 1835. This should of course not detract from the fact that the majority of the Yucatecan elite did have faith in their political ideals, using the *pronunciamiento* to promote and protect them, (such as federalists Manuel Crescencio Rejón, José Tiburcio López, and Juan de Dios Cosgaya, or centralist Joaquín Casares de Armas). In fact, Vázquez believes that to refer to *any* of these figures as *chaqueteros* is “absurdo”.⁶⁷⁰

Rivas was one of those men who were committed to their political ideals, and Imán was not able to persuade him to join his federalist cause. On the contrary, Rivas wasted no time in suppressing the uprising. When Imán pronounced on 29 May 1839 in Tizimín, his *pronunciados* made a sorry sight: some 70-80 (the promised 400 had never shown up) men

⁶⁶⁹ Rugeley, “En busca de Santiago Imán”, p.6.

⁶⁷⁰ Vázquez, “Los años olvidados”, p.314.

made up of some deserters of the Third Active Battalion, *vecinos* of the town, and some former Haitian slaves from the ranch of San Fernando and from San Felipe, as Imán “tumultariamente exclamó la Federación.”⁶⁷¹ His forces then went to Espita, where Rivas’ forces roundly defeated the *pronunciados* in the mere space of two hours. The rebels fled, abandoning their arms, as well as a flag which Imán had prepared for the occasion.⁶⁷²

The *pronunciado* elite ridiculed the pitiful and solitary attempt and lack of prestige of the event and actors, thus highlighting yet another aspect of the traditional Yucatecan *pronunciamiento*. The *pronunciamiento* in Yucatán – as has been demonstrated – was not a movement of the *pueblos*, despite the fact that it constantly claimed to be representing the voices of “the people” and the *voluntad general*. The *pronunciamiento* in this area of Mexico was instead a tool employed by the elite of Mérida and Campeche, as they used the practice in their constant struggle for local political power. These elite figures – including even Imán’s former conspirators – embarrassed by the whole spectacle of Imán’s failed *pronunciamiento*, turned away from him, claiming to have no connection to the man or the movement, and even criticised him. He was a nobody, some cowboy from the east who had most likely disobeyed their orders, and was now trying to play *their* game of pronouncing, without having the faintest idea of what he was doing. Federalist and Commander of the First Active Battalion Felipe de la Cámara, who had been involved in the conspiracy for the planned *pronunciamiento*, remarked in his diary that he was shocked that Imán had dared to head a *pronunciamiento* without any other points of support in the peninsula:

No dejé de extrañar sobremanera que un Capitán miliciano depuesto de su empleo, sin conocimientos en el arte de Guerra, conocido por su carácter quieto y tranquilo, sin opinión ni antecedentes que lo abonasen, en fin, para decirlo de una vez, una inutilidad bajo todos conceptos, se echase sobre sí, el enorme peso de un

⁶⁷¹ Letter from Pedro Marcial Guerra to the Escmo. Sr. Secretario de Estado y del Despacho de lo Interior, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Correspondencia Oficial, Vol.9, Exp.14, 8 June 1839.

⁶⁷² *Copiador de la correspondencia del gobernador con autoridades de Mérida*, AGEY, Libro Complementario 12, 1 June 1839; Rugeley, “En busca de Santiago Imán”, p.6.

acontecimiento de tan graves consecuencias [...] desde entonces desconfié del buen éxito [del pronunciamiento].⁶⁷³

Governor Pedro Marcial Guerra called Imán's first attempt to pronounce a "Ruidoso, temerario e insignificante pronunciamiento" and a "ridículo grito." In his words, "Don Santiago Imán no es un militar de carrera. Sin talento ni instrucción: sin relaciones ni prestigio: sin concepto ni recursos, ha obrado como un bandido: acaudillando [...] los más desertores y algunos morenos idiotas del pueblo."⁶⁷⁴ In the eastern town of Tihosuco, the authorities reported his *pronunciamiento* attempt as "El descabellado e insignificante pronunciamiento acaudillado por Imán de unos pocos revoltosos de Tizimín."⁶⁷⁵

Imán was indeed without arms, resources, men, prestige, and connections: the things needed to make a *pronunciamiento* work. He himself was not the most impressive *pronunciamiento* leader: a mere captain from a small town in the east, the Campechean and Meridian elite ridiculed him for the Mayan accent of his Spanish. He was not the best prototype of a soldier, as riding on horseback irritated his haemorrhoids, while migraines, provoked by loud noises from cannons, gun fire, or even military music, sidelined him in the midst of battle.⁶⁷⁶ As Fowler has pointed out, a *pronunciamiento* needed the element of, in Max Weber's terms, "charismatic domination", a hero-type figure who commanded respect and inspired mobilisation, a military man in most instances, with experience and demonstrated success in starting – not just seconding as was in Imán's case – *pronunciamientos*.⁶⁷⁷ Yucatecans had to view him as a figure with – in Báquer's words – the "prestigio necesario"⁶⁷⁸ which would inspire them to support him and second his act, not to look on in surprise while he put on such an embarrassing show. In nineteenth-century

⁶⁷³ De la Cámara, *Memorias*, p.42.

⁶⁷⁴ Letter from Pedro Marcial Guerra to the Escmo Sr Secretario de Estado y del Despacho de lo Interior [...] 8 June 1839.

⁶⁷⁵ AGEY, Libro Complementario 11, *Copiador de la correspondencia del gobernador con autoridades de Tekax*, 7 June 1839.

⁶⁷⁶ Rugeley, *Rebellion now and forever*, p.2.

⁶⁷⁷ Fowler, "I Pronounce thus I Exist", p.260.

⁶⁷⁸ Báquer, *El modelo español*, p.63.

Mexico, you only really “existed” politically and militarily if you had led a victorious and significant *pronunciamiento*. Imán had not done this, and consequently did not exist in this sense; the consequence was that “people would not know who you were, what you stood for, or how resourceful you were at summoning support and/or succeeding in effecting shifts in government policy.”⁶⁷⁹

Imán evidently lacked many things, but he did not lack audacity. To him, his defeat was a mere stumbling block. He took refuge in the coast, establishing himself in the *casa principal* of San Fernando, while he worked on getting more men and resources. The fact that he could attract more recruits after such an embarrassing and disheartening defeat demonstrated the level of local resentment for the *sorteo*. Still, his resources and men were extremely meagre. According to the account of Felipe de la Cámara, whose brother Camilo went to visit Imán:

toda la artillería del Sr. Imán se componía de una pieza de a 8 medio desfogonada y montada sobre unos polines, situada en el andén de una noria y por todo parque, cuatro tiros de metralla, otra pieza estaba servida por seis negros [...] la pieza no tenía gente de infantería que la sostuviera, y mi hermano hizo notar al Sr. Imán todas estas fallas pero éste le contestó con la mayor sangre fría “qué le vamos a hacer, no hay gente.”⁶⁸⁰

In comparison, government forces of more than 300 men, heavily equipped and commanded by Manuel Eusebio Molina and Tomás O’Horán, together with Rivas, attacked Imán in San Fernando on 19 June, with the battle lasting about 10 minutes,⁶⁸¹ causing the rebels to disperse among the forests and environs of the towns of Sucopó and Chancénote, while the government troops established barracks in Espita.⁶⁸²

While in refuge, Imán recruited even more support, this time more significant. He received arms and money from discontented *hombres de bien* such as Alfonso Vásquez of

⁶⁷⁹ Fowler, “I Pronounce thus I Exist”, p.261.

⁶⁸⁰ De la Cámara, *Memorias*, p.43.

⁶⁸¹ Ibid.

⁶⁸² AGEY, Libro Complementario 12, *Copiador de la correspondencia del gobernador con autoridades de Mérida*, 22 June 1839; AGEY, Libro Complementario 11, *Copiador de la correspondencia del gobernador con autoridades de Tekax*, 26 June 1839.

Tihosuco⁶⁸³ and Ignacio Medina of Campeche.⁶⁸⁴ His wife María Nicolasa Virgilio provided him with news of events in Valladolid, Espita, and Tizimín; many said that she was the one who directed the early stages of the revolution. She sought out supporters and directed them to Imán, among them soon-to-be rebel heads Vicente Revilla (a deserter from the Galeana Battalion of Campeche), and Vito Pacheco (who was fleeing from an assassination which he committed in Ascensión Bay). Pacheco had contacts in the contraband trade, and assisted in getting arms and resources for the revolt.⁶⁸⁵ Soon after, José María Vergara, “un pobre hombre que andaba descalzo en esos tiempos”, and Pastor Gamboa, a “soldado desertor del batallón 3º activo”⁶⁸⁶ joined the heads of the *pronunciamiento*.

More supporters joined when in mid-June 1839, 150 recruited soldiers from the Third Active Battalion (destined for Texas) sailing from Sisal to Veracruz revolted on the ship and forced the captain to disembark in Celestún, a short distance from Sisal. There, a sergeant gave the order that “Compañeros, no tenemos más recurso que el Sr Imán, vamos a incorporarnos a sus tropas,”⁶⁸⁷ as they made their way to the “montañas de Tizimín.”⁶⁸⁸ The *pronunciamiento* was thus truly taking the character of a popular movement; actors from all backgrounds were now involved: the military, *campesinos*, slaves and *vecinos*. It is significant to note that this was the very first *pronunciamiento* in Yucatecan history which was beginning to live up to the constant claim that it was indeed justly representing the

⁶⁸³ *Copia de la relación de los suplementos proporcionados por Don Alfonso Vázquez de Tihosuco, al Gral Don Santiago Imán, al tiempo de su levantamiento*, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Gobernación, Vol.14, Exp.31, 21 December 1840.

⁶⁸⁴ AGEY, Libro Complementario 10, *Copiador de la correspondencia del gobernador con autoridades de Izamal*, 2 November 1839.

⁶⁸⁵ Baqueiro, *Ensayo Histórico*, p.24.

⁶⁸⁶ Pedro Marcial Guerra to the Escmo. Sr. Secretario de Estado y del Despacho de lo Interior, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Correspondencia Oficial, Vol.9, Exp.14, 8 June 1839.

⁶⁸⁷ Baqueiro, *Ensayo Histórico*, p.25.

⁶⁸⁸ Pedro Marcial Guerra to the Escmo. Sr. Secretario de Estado y del Despacho de lo Interior, AGN, Gobernación, Sin Sección, Caja 249, Exp.18, Mérida, 14 June 1839.

desires of *the people*. In the words of Báquer, a true *pronunciamiento* involving “una síntesis de Ejército y Pueblo que reclama el cambio”⁶⁸⁹ was forming.

With Imán’s forces now bolstered and numbering between 500 and 700, they attacked Tizimín on 22 August. They defeated government forces commanded by Eduardo Vadillo, Rivas, Andrés Deniz and Tomás O’ Horán.⁶⁹⁰ It was their first victory and Imán finally issued his long-awaited *pronunciamiento* text on 12 November, which self-proclaimed him as “el Libertador del Oriente,”⁶⁹¹ and which was limited to calling for the federation, the dissolution of the Third Active Battalion and the reimposition of the authorities of 1834.⁶⁹² The *pronunciados*, many of them experiencing their armed empowerment for the first time, lost control. They looted and sacked Tizimín, with Imán threatening to shoot anyone who refused to sign his act. They murdered Francisco Torre, justice of the peace of the nearby town of Kikil, for harbouring centralist sympathies. The rebels seized supplies from the haciendas surrounding the town, and constructed defences on all roads leading to the centre, awaiting government forces. As in 1834, the *pronunciamiento* had given way to violence (that time through civil war). Once more, the *pronunciados* thought their actions justified, because of their official declaration that they were carrying out a *pronunciamiento*, not a revolt. The experience of 1834 had demonstrated that violence could “legitimately” be used, as it was all in aim of serving the needs of the *patria*. Thus, the practice of the *pronunciamiento* was now being used for legitimising the unlawful, “as a means of institutionalizing the wilderness, civilizing barbarism”, as bureaucratic form excused the behaviour of *pueblo* and mob rule.⁶⁹³

⁶⁸⁹ Báquer, *El modelo español*, p.41.

⁶⁹⁰ Letter from Pedro Marcial Guerra to the Excmo. Sr. Secretario del Estado y del Despacho de Ministro de lo Interior, AGEY, Correspondencia Oficial, Vol.8, Exp.19, 7 September 1839; Letter from *ibid.* to *ibid.*, AGEY, Correspondencia Oficial, Vol.9, Exp.8, 29 August 1839.

⁶⁹¹ *Información practicada por el subdelegado de Ichmul, sobre un tumulto provocado por varios vecinos de Tiholop*, Peto, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Gobernación, Vol.12, Exp.21, 6 August 1840.

⁶⁹² Campos García, *Que los yucatecos*, p.167.

⁶⁹³ Fowler, “I pronounce thus I exist”, p.258.

It is of note that Imán only now issued his text after revolting for the better part of 1839. Certain *pronunciamiento* critics such as Guerra and Vázquez maintain that in the established process of a *pronunciamiento*, the text is issued before the mobilization of the participants of the revolt. This initial circulation and official publication of dissent is in their view one of the key ritualistic and defining elements of a *pronunciamiento*. Indeed, according to Guerra, the first step in a *pronunciamiento* is “una declaración programática de principios y propuestas” which is then followed by an appeal to supporters, a propaganda campaign, and finally the revolt itself.⁶⁹⁴ The fact that Imán issued his text *after* revolting for such a long period nevertheless implies that his was initially a simple *campesino* “revolt”, which only issued a text to “legitimize” its existence, and convert it into a *pronunciamiento*.

When one takes into account the very first successful *pronunciamiento* known in history, this argument may not seem as valid. General Rafael de Riego was the first person to ever refer to his 1821 revolt as a *pronunciamiento*, as he believed it was more a method of representing the will of a people attempting to forcefully negotiate with the authorities in power, than a simple *coup d'état*. However, as Fowler points out, although Riego issued two *proclamas* (official announcements), “he did not actually produce one single *pronunciamiento* text.”⁶⁹⁵ If this was indeed what one considers to be the very first *pronunciamiento*, then it seems somewhat invalid to argue that the lack of an initial *pronunciamiento* text makes it “not a *pronunciamiento*.” Added to this is the fact that Imán never had time to issue his *pronunciamiento* text: every time that he attempted to pronounce, government forces quickly defeated the *pronunciados*. Nevertheless, upon his very first success, he did not hesitate to issue his *acta*. This would then imply that the Imán revolt was indeed a *pronunciamiento* all along.

⁶⁹⁴ Guerra, “El pronunciamiento”, p.15; Vázquez, “Political Plans”, p.20.

⁶⁹⁵ Fowler, “The Origins”, p.25.

The issuing of a text did not prevent government troops from defeating Imán's forces in Tizimín, as a new force of 200 men commanded by Tomás Requeña triumphed over the rebels on 12 December, with the *pronunciados* once more dispersing.⁶⁹⁶ One should note the attitude of the federalists in the main cities during this period of continual defeats of Imán. They manifested no connection with him, and had not acknowledged his *pronunciamiento* in Tizimín. Felipe de la Cámara, Commander of the First Active Battalion stationed in the port of Sisal, was eager to issue a *pronunciamiento de adhesión* to Imán's act, but the federalists in Mérida ordered him to wait; in his words "nos calmaban con protestas de que por otro lado se estaba trabajando en la revolución, y que llegaría el tiempo de que se utilizasen nuestros servicios."⁶⁹⁷ This attitude needs to be taken into consideration; the federalist "allies" of Mérida had every intention of letting Imán do all the hard work, until the time was right for them to take over the *pronunciamiento*. This was just the beginning of how the faction would exploit Imán for the realisation of *their pronunciamiento*, not his.

After defeating Imán, Requeña established a small garrison of 200 men commanded by Carlos María Araoz in the city of Valladolid, to ensure that the rebels could not succeed there.⁶⁹⁸ The *pronunciados* fled to the immediate forests of Chemax, where they worked to reinforce themselves. Imán's movement now acquired its definitive proportions as the leader began to mobilise a previously unused force in the *pronunciamiento*: the Maya. The decision made sense: they numbered in the thousands, and while Imán was aware that he did not have elite support, he decided that would he have manpower instead. His need for followers obligated him to incorporate truly popular demands. He used typical *pronunciamiento* cooption: if he won his *pronunciamiento* with the support of the Maya, he would eliminate their most dreaded tax – the obvention. There could not have been a more powerful way of

⁶⁹⁶ Baqueiro, *Ensayo Histórico*, p.27.

⁶⁹⁷ De la Cámara, *Memorias*, p.24.

⁶⁹⁸ Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, p.368; AGEY, Libro Complementario 12, *Copiador de la correspondencia del gobernador con autoridades de Mérida*, 23 November 1839.

rousing the Maya; the heavy burden of the annual tax – of 12 ½ *reales* for men and 9 for women – had led to constant and increased numbers of Maya fleeing from the towns to the mountains as they tried to evade collection by the local clergy.⁶⁹⁹ After Imán's proclamation to the Maya, he was soon surrounded by thousands of them armed with machetes and whatever other weapons they could amass.⁷⁰⁰ The number of his new followers will never be known; Imán insisted that he had 80,000 supporters, but this was surely an exaggeration; later reports would number the *pronunciados* between 5,000-7,000 men, still an impressive and frightening force to contend with.⁷⁰¹

The news of the integration of the Maya had a dual effect: the *vecinos* in the east, knowledgeable of the horrors which had taken place in Tizimín and worried at thousands of armed Maya at their doorstep, saw a real threat of a Caste War if they resisted Imán's forces. Simultaneously, the federalists in Mérida, aware of the swelling of Imán's army and the intimidation which it provoked, saw hope for a lasting and successful *pronunciamiento*. They instructed federalist Pablo Castellanos, who was then *juzgado de primera instancia* of Valladolid, to advise Imán to occupy Valladolid and issue his *pronunciamiento*. There was another important ally on Imán's side in Valladolid giving instructions: Agustín Acereto, the premier caudillo of Valladolid, a powerful and dangerous man. He had occupied various political positions, he had multiple properties, and he had a network of support perhaps without rival in the east.⁷⁰² Although a centralist, there were several things which had annoyed him lately: the central government's implementation of property and business taxes had damaged his finances, and the *sorteo* had affected his workforce. He also did not permit

⁶⁹⁹ The reports of Maya migrating to the mountains to avoid the obvention tax are numerous. See: Letter from José A. Torres and José María Guerra to the Governor, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Correspondencia Oficial, Vol.6, Exp.9, 31 March 1837; Letter from Juan Pablo Talavera to the Governor, AGEY, Libro Complementario 9, *Copiador de la correspondencia del gobernador con autoridades del Camino Real Bajo*, 17 February 1838; Letter from Juan Pablo Talavera to the Governor, AGEY, Correspondencia Oficial, Vol.8, Exp.18, 3 April 1838; Letter from Antonio Ávila to the Governor, AGEY, Poder Ejecutivo, Correspondencia Oficial, Vol.7, Exp.6, 19 April 1838.

⁷⁰⁰ Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, pp.368-369.

⁷⁰¹ "Exposición del ayuntamiento de Dzibalchen", 18 March 1840 in *Los Pueblos*, 4 April 1840.

⁷⁰² Rugeley, "En busca de Santiago Imán", p.5.

anyone contesting his authority in the east: recently installed centralist and Commander of the Third Active Battalion Roberto Rivas was that man. Additionally, Acereto was fearful of what armed Maya in their masses could do to those who supported the centralist government; he also was not unaware of what had happened in Tizimín. Consequently, he and his powerful eastern network of Roque Rosado, Francisco Esquivel, Luis Rivero, Pantaleón Carrillo, Severo Villamil, Manuel Rosado, Victoriano Ruz, Paulino Vivas, Julián Alcalá, Antonio Heredia and Esteban Ruiz all quickly began proclaiming their adhesion to federalism, and negotiating for the success of Imán and his federalist *pronunciamiento* in Valladolid.⁷⁰³ Imán accepted the propositions, and with his Mayan forces he made for Valladolid.⁷⁰⁴

On 8 February 1840, Imán's men occupied the barrio of Sisal of Valladolid without resistance.⁷⁰⁵ Upon notice of the occupation, government troops left the main plaza of Valladolid to battle them; but upon seeing the sheer number of Maya, simply joined the rebels. Leaders Miguel Cámara and Tomás O' Horán entered the Imán camp to negotiate, where they were informed that if they did not pronounce immediately they would be shot;⁷⁰⁶ they immediately became supporters of the federalist *pronunciamiento*. The *pronunciados* shot and killed leader of the government troops Araoz, and Valladolid remained at the mercy of the rebels. Imán entered the city of Valladolid four days later, in an almost royal manner in his *inhis koché* (a type of Mayan portable carriage) on the shoulders of his Mayan supporters.⁷⁰⁷

On the same day of 12 February, he issued his definitive *pronunciamiento* text. Claiming to serve “el clamor general” and considering what would be “más conducente al

⁷⁰³ *Causa seguida contra Don Agustín Acereto, Roque Rosado y socios por asonada*, AGEY, Justicia, Justicia Penal, Vol.17, Exp.18, 12 May 1838.

⁷⁰⁴ Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, p.369.

⁷⁰⁵ Baranda, *Recordaciones*, p.333.

⁷⁰⁶ Rugeley, “En busca de Santiago Imán”, p.5.

⁷⁰⁷ Rugeley, *Yucatán's Maya Peasantry and the Origins of the Caste War* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996), p.118.

bien de la patria” (standard *pronunciamiento* rhetoric) and apologising for the previous lack of an extensive text due to “las aflictivas circunstancias” which “no se lo habían permitido hasta ahora: pero que ya la suerte le proporciona momento tan favorable,”⁷⁰⁸ the *pronunciamiento* explicitly denounced the 1837 centralist system and called for the reestablishment of the 1824 federalist constitution. In the words of the *pronunciamiento* itself, its aim was “el restablecimiento del sistema Federal; y considerando que esta medida salvadora debía poner en efecto un término a los innumerables males que gravitan sobre los pueblos de este Estado, cuya miseria y escasez toca al extremo.”⁷⁰⁹ Imán added in a manifesto issued on the same day the essentiality of the preservation of union with Mexico, as it was important to maintain “los sagrados vínculos” and “identifican nuestros intereses con el resto de la República Mexicana, a que juramos pertenecer [...] nuestro objeto no es sustraernos de la obediencia del Supremo Gobierno.”⁷¹⁰ Additionally, the *pronunciados* demanded the restoration of the authorities and Congress of 1834, the invalidity of the 1837 government and consequently all its officials and decrees, and the cessation of all contributions, taxes, and tariffs imposed by the central government. The eastern *pronunciados* had manifestly incorporated regional demands in order to provide national legitimacy, and to create the opportunity for the federalists in the cities to second the *pronunciamiento*.

While the *pronunciamiento* had incorporated broad political ideology to incite support from the federalists, it did not ignore the local factors which had been plaguing the provincial elite sector of the east, and more specifically, Imán himself. The text highlighted the broad spectrum of society which had been included in Imán’s movement, as it denounced the “continuadas y multiplicadas exacciones con que la actual administración ha afligido a los

⁷⁰⁸ Baqueiro, *Evolucion histórica*, p.272.

⁷⁰⁹ Ibid., p.271.

⁷¹⁰ *Allocución de Santiago Imán*, CAIHY, Impresos, VIII.1840.001, 12 February 1840.

propietarios y a todas las demás clases.”⁷¹¹ Of equal significance, the *pronunciados*’ condemnation of the “ominoso decreto del sorteo” pervaded throughout the text. They criticised the practice for daring to “ultrajar la dignidad de los hombres en un pueblo libre, y que tenga término la deportación de los hijos de esta Península a sostener en países insanos una guerra ruinosa para la República.”⁷¹² The solution, according to the *pronunciados*, was to completely dissolve the Third Active Battalion, “cuya organización y existencia ha sido hasta aquí tan perjudicial, impolítica y ruinosa a los partidos de Izamal, Valladolid y Tizimín.”⁷¹³

The *pronunciamiento* also reflected Imán’s cooption of eastern civilian support from both the higher and lower classes. It demanded, as promised to the Maya, the abolition of the indigenous obvention tax, making this *pronunciamiento* the first of its kind (in Yucatán) which included popular – and moreover indigenous – demands instead of just elite concerns.⁷¹⁴ The deals struck with the elite civilians – particularly Acereto and his circle – were also evident, as the *pronunciamiento* declared the establishment of a temporary junta to rule the peninsula, constituting of Pablo Castellanos, Agustín Acereto, Miguel Cámara, Buenaventura Pérez and José Antonio García.⁷¹⁵ These very same figures, along with men from the rest of Acereto’s group, such as Roque Rosado, had signed the *pronunciamiento* text. This was the manifestation of the cooption of elite civilian support which Imán had desperately needed to bolster the *pronunciamiento*’s strength. As has been mentioned, it was essential that the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* demonstrate the presence of powerful and influential figures in order to have a chance of being seconded and thus succeeding. The Imán movement had been deeply lacking in this aspect; indeed, he had been the most elite figure of the movement until recently, and the ridicule which he had undergone had been evident. The support of the true caudillos of the east consequently gave the *pronunciamiento* the necessary

⁷¹¹ Baqueiro, *Evolucion histórica*, p.272.

⁷¹² Ibid.

⁷¹³ Ibid., p.274.

⁷¹⁴ Ibid.

⁷¹⁵ Ibid., p.273.

status in order for the Meridian and Campechean elite to recognise it as an exercise which they could relate to, and thus second.

Imán was to also attempt to fulfil more personal ambitions in the *pronunciamiento*. Previous Yucatecan *pronunciamientos* had demonstrated that the practice could allow *pronunciados* to leap to the top of the political and military ladder, and Imán did not intend to be excluded. The constant defeats, disregard, and contempt which he had undergone throughout his struggles would have no doubt affected him, and he intended to correct this situation, to finally “exist” politically and militarily. Imán’s text thus stated that he was to maintain the title of *Comandante general de las armas del Ejército libertador*,⁷¹⁶ and would have ultimate say in all political decisions made by the established junta, as well as extensive military power.

The *pronunciamiento*, with its elite civilian support, had finally secured the respect of the elite in the capital of Mérida. The news of the success of the *pronunciamiento* led to a meeting among the federalist faction of the Unión in Mérida as they decided how to second the act. It is significant to note that with the increasing success of the Imán movement, many important centralists who had been affected by the damaging economic decrees (such as Pedro and Nestor Escudero de la Rocha and Vicente Solís) had united with the federalist club in Mérida to get rid of the centralist system. Now, however, differences hampered the seconding of Imán’s *pronunciamiento* as the two groups had their own “intereses e intenciones”, to keep in mind, with each faction demanding “la dirección y gobierno del movimiento”⁷¹⁷. On the one hand, Pedro Escudero, chief of the Rochela faction, claimed that if he did not head the *pronunciamiento de adhesión*, he would turn over his support to centralist Governor Guerra; he wanted conditional separation of Yucatán from Mexico “mientras se logra el cambio de las instituciones.” On the other hand, López, Cosgaya, José

⁷¹⁶ Ibid., pp.274-275.

⁷¹⁷ De la Cámara, *Memorias*, p.57.

Encarnación Cámara and the Barbachano brothers proposed a permanent “Gobierno independiente”, with the establishment of Yucatán’s own constitution, and the reimposition of the authorities of 1834.⁷¹⁸

With the bickering in the capital seeing no end, Imán was losing patience and announced his intention to march on the city. Fearful of a Mayan army heading into the west, military men José Encarnación Cámara and Anastasio Torrens abandoned the junta and in the *ciudadela* of San Benito in Mérida carried out the plan in accordance with the pro-absolute independence group, excluding La Rochela from the movement.⁷¹⁹ The *Acta de la Guarnición de Mérida* of 18 February 1840, claiming to represent “una inmensa mayoría del pueblo” but carried out by the Meridian elite, called itself a *pronunciamiento de adhesión*, but in reality had very little in common with Imán’s act.⁷²⁰ It called for federalism and the reimposition of the authorities of 1834, and the cessation of all economic decrees of the centralist administration. It then however declared that “El departamento de Yucatán se erige en estado libre e independiente y en tal virtud restablece la Constitución de 1824 [...] mientras que este no vuelva al orden del régimen federal en los términos que establece el artículo de esta acta.”⁷²¹ Imán had never wanted independence from Mexico; in fact, he had been explicitly clear about the necessity of preserving the union with it. The Meridian *pronunciamiento* moreover made no mention of the dissolution of the Third Active Battalion, the abolition of the obvention, or the empowerment of Imán, no doubt the elements closest to Imán and his supporters’ hearts, and farthest from those of the political elite in Mérida and Campeche.

⁷¹⁸ Ibid.

⁷¹⁹ Baqueiro, *Ensayo Histórico*, pp.266-270.

⁷²⁰ Those signing the *pronunciamiento* were mainly the military elite of Mérida, including José Anastasio Torrens, Lieutenant Colonels of the army Clemente Trujillo and Manuel López de Llergo, Isidro Rejón, Commander of the First Active Battalion Felipe de la Cámara, and José Cosgaya, along with civilian elite politicians Pedro Casares y Armas and Francisco Barbachano.

⁷²¹ Baqueiro, *Ensayo Histórico*, pp.280-283.

The powerful Meridians and Campecheans had consequently hijacked Imán's *campesino*-backed movement voicing the needs of the people, and had transformed it into a traditional Yucatecan elite *pronunciamiento*. History more or less repeated itself, as the Meridians had taken over the Campechean *pronunciamiento* for independence in 1821, the *camarilleros* had commandeered the centralist *pronunciamiento* of 1829, and now the elite had usurped the Imán *pronunciamiento*. This business of taking a local *pronunciamiento* and making the *pronunciamiento de adhesión* even more powerful than the original act was thus not uncommon in Yucatán. This time, however, it was not one elite faction commandeering another elite faction's *pronunciamiento*. This was the political elite taking over a movement which had included concerns of and had triumphed because of *the people*. The same Yucatecans who had been trumpeting for more than a decade – and still were – that the reason for the very existence of their *pronunciamientos* was to serve the needs of the people and protect their sacred rights, had dismissed a movement that had truly represented the voices of the middle class, the *campesinos* and the Maya. No *pronunciamiento* in their minds had any business empowering the lower classes, or even Imán; that was simply too dangerous. A Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* was, to them, simply an excuse and a justification for the elite to gain power in the capital and implement the decrees which they liked. They (the elite) thus casually disregarded the objectives most desired by Imán and his supporters.

The federalists, conscious of the clear discrepancies between their *pronunciamiento* and Imán's, were nevertheless careful to mask their *pronunciamiento* as one of “*adhesión*” so as to maintain the heroic appearance of Imán's act which had been motivated by the true *voluntad del pueblo*. The elite had simply used Imán and his people (after they had struggled for years) as a platform to stand on and issue their own act, which dealt with their own interests. This only serves to highlight the real dynamic of the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento*: an elite instrument used to gain political power, as it shifted back and forth from *camarilleros*

to *ligados*, from *meridanos* to *campechanos*, and now from centralists to federalists. The elite had quickly corrected any illusions about a *pronunciamiento* ever serving the needs of the people; the *pronunciamiento* would maintain its traditional use.

A well coordinated elite military machine ensured that Imán's *pronunciamiento* was seconded throughout the western region almost immediately. Lieutenant Captain Eulogio Rosado raised the *adhesión* in the barracks of the First Active Battalion in Mérida on the very same day, with Felipe de la Cámara and Antonio Palma seconding it in Sisal, Motul, and Hunucmá.⁷²² In the east and the south, Imán's forces commanded by Lieutenant Colonels Pacheco and Revilla ensured that the towns of the districts of Izamal and Tihosuco pronounced in support.⁷²³ Even though the region seconded Imán's *pronunciamiento* in name, those in power knew that it was their Meridian *pronunciamiento* which they would realise. With all communities seconding the *pronunciamiento* – with only the exception of Campeche, where Commander General Zayas and the regular army remained steadfastly stubborn – Governor Guerra was isolated and found himself unable to combat the revolutionary advance. The authorities of 1834 – including Governor Juan de Dios Cosgaya – resumed their positions on the same day of 18 February, with no resistance from the centralists in Mérida.

Despite the sidelining of Imán's act, and the ridiculing and disregard which he had undergone in previous years, he now for a moment enjoyed the satisfaction of being a Yucatecan hero. The re-established federalists held festivals in his honour and proclaimed 25 July as a day to celebrate “el caudillo del Ejército Libertador del Oriente”; adornments decorated Mérida's citadel of San Benito and the government palace; guns were fired, church bells were rung, all these celebrated the Liberator and his *pronunciamiento*.⁷²⁴ The official discourse, which had formerly denounced the “faccioso Imán”, rapidly changed its tune and

⁷²² Baqueiro, *Ensayo Histórico*, p.34.

⁷²³ Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, p.370.

⁷²⁴ Rugeley, *Yucatán's Maya Peasantry*, p.122.

recognised him as chief of Valladolid.⁷²⁵ Newspapers such as *Los Pueblos* proclaimed “El hijo predilecto y benemérito Santiago Imán” as “Héroe de la libertad! Salvador del pueblo!”, advising him and his fellow *pronunciados* “Marchad cubierto de los inmarcesibles laureles que habéis granjeado.”⁷²⁶ When describing the *pronunciamiento*, the editors of the same newspaper praised that “La simple voz del animoso caudillo del Oriente, del inmortal IMÁN, se levantó en masa, y con semblante sereno, actitud noble e imponente, exclamó: “No más sufrimiento.”⁷²⁷ Somehow the humility of his military status was now something to be praised instead of ridiculed, with the *ayuntamiento* of Dzibalchen exclaiming admiringly, “no es más que un simple teniente, emprendió su valor desnudado, nos han dado patria y libertad.”⁷²⁸ Finally, it was claimed that “El héroe del Oriente” was responsible for restoring “la libertad de Yucatán” as “no hay yucateco que no le tribute agradecido los más justos homenajes de respeto y veneración, y que no le mire como la salvaguardia de sus derechos.”⁷²⁹

Actions and words soon clashed, however, in a most ambiguous reaction. Despite the praise of Imán, it was soon made clear that no man from the east without military prestige and who was inexperienced in politics – despite his heroic act and his social status in Tizimín – deserved to mix in Meridian elite politics. He would not be taking any position of power as his *pronunciamiento* had called for. As Cosgaya reclaimed his post of governor, the *junta gubernativa* erected by Imán’s *pronunciamiento* was quickly demolished, with the Congress of 1834 recommencing on 28 February.⁷³⁰ Imán was to be continually excluded; the first instance was in the battle to second the *pronunciamiento* in Campeche. The regular army which was stationed there – headed by Commander General Rivas Zayas – had issued its own

⁷²⁵ Rugeley, “En busca de Santiago Imán”, p.6.

⁷²⁶ *Los Pueblos*, 4 April 1840.

⁷²⁷ *Los Pueblos*, 16 May 1840.

⁷²⁸ “Exposición del ayuntamiento de Dzibalchen”, 18 March 1840.

⁷²⁹ *Los Pueblos*, 30 June 1840.

⁷³⁰ *Alocución de Juan de Dios Cosgaya*, CAIHY, Impresos, 1840-1855, VIII.1840.002, 19 February 1840.

pronunciamiento on 25 February, declaring its loyalty to Mexico and refusing to recognise the reinstalled authorities of 1834; they claimed that this government, being restored through popular will, was invalid and consequently had no power over constitutional bodies. In their words:

Que no existiendo en ningún pueblo el derecho de dictar leyes a la nación, no debe verse en tales *pronunciamientos* sino un crimen digno del más severo castigo por cuanto trastornan las instituciones, violan los más sagrados principios y relajan los lazos de la obediencia y subordinación.⁷³¹

Imán was not even invited to the expedition to second the *pronunciamiento* in Campeche. The Meridian elite did not want the eastern caudillo and his *campesino* and Mayan contingent in western territory. Instead, they sent Lieutenant Colonel and long time *pronunciado* Sebastián López de Llergo to do the act, much to the disgust of Imán. While Llergo raised the *pronunciamientos de adhesión* of the towns of Tenabo, Hecelchakán, and Calkiní in his transit to Campeche, Imán arrived in Mérida with his troops on 15 March, asking the governor if he could take part in the Campechean project, only to be told that the government would request his services if they were needed.⁷³² Imán insisted, and after numerous pleas, Governor Cosgaya eventually relented; the Liberator was already scrambling to retain his spotlight. In the meantime, a contingent of 600-700 men had arrived from Veracruz to aid Rivas Zayas and the garrison in Campeche.⁷³³ After months of negotiations and several battles between the *pronunciados* and government forces, Imán and Llergo triumphed over Campeche on 16 June.⁷³⁴

The actions of exclusion of the hero were to nevertheless continue. The *hombres de bien* did not fail to recognise that Imán's movement was not of "opinión política" but had, in Rivas Zayas' words, the "carácter de una revolución de castas,"⁷³⁵ and they wanted Imán and

⁷³¹ Baqueiro, *Ensayo Histórico*, pp.280-283.

⁷³² Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán* Tomo III, pp.376-377.

⁷³³ Ibid., p.377.

⁷³⁴ Baqueiro, *Ensayo Histórico*, p.37.

⁷³⁵ Rugeley, "En busca de Santiago Imán", p.7.

his armed Maya – or as Cosgaya called them, “la bizarra tropa del patriota general Imán”⁷³⁶ – back in their eastern towns where they belonged. As Rugeley has pointed out, the dictatorship in Guatemala of Rafael Carrera – who was supported by an army of Maya – was well known in Yucatán, and the political elite had no intention of the pattern repeating itself here.⁷³⁷ Elite alarm increased when a group commissioned by Imán visited the governor to complain that the Meridian *pronunciamiento* had not fulfilled the most important articles of Imán’s act, mainly, naming Imán as maximum military authority, the dissolution of the Third Active Battalion, and the abolition of the obvention.⁷³⁸ To quieten Imán, he was offered the rank of Brigadier General as an honorific title, which was, in the opinion of Felipe de la Cámara, a title which avoided “ultrajando la distinguida clase de oficiales generales, con un nombramiento a todas luces extemporáneo e inútil.”⁷³⁹ With regard to the other demands, on 23 August 1840 the obvention tax was abolished, but was immediately replaced by a religious contribution of one *real* every month for men aged between 14 and 60. The dissolution of the body of the Third Active Battalion, claimed to be “una medida que exige hace mucho tiempo la equidad, la política, y la rigurosa justicia”⁷⁴⁰ was to be postponed until further notice, and the east and its people had been ignored and shoved aside by the federalist elite.

Imán nevertheless refused to return to Tizimín, and remained in Campeche throughout the summer of 1840, stubbornly considering his political options. The press now began turning against him, repeating with frequency that Imán had no intention to take any power or

⁷³⁶ *Manifiesto que el ciudadano Juan de Dios Cosgaya, gobernador constitucional del estado libre y soberano de Yucatán, hace a sus conciudadanos, con motivo de las últimas ocurrencias que precedieron a su entrada a esta plaza* in *Los Pueblos*, 23 June 1840.

⁷³⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷³⁸ *Diario del Gobierno de la Republica Mejicana*, 20 February 1840.

⁷³⁹ De la Cámara, *Memorias*, p.71.

⁷⁴⁰ *Exposición que hizo el E.Sr. gobernador del Estado libre y soberano de Yucatán, ciudadano Juan de Dios Cosgaya, al abrir sus sesiones el A. Congreso instalado el 20 de agosto de 1840*, in *Los Pueblos*, 22 August 1840.

reward for himself, and that he only wanted to return to his lands in the east.⁷⁴¹ The refusal to grant him any power was also manifest, as after elections in late August, – with Santiago Méndez becoming governor and Miguel Barbachano being elected vice-governor – Imán did not even get the role of *diputado* of Tizimín, as this post was for the priest Buenaventura Pérez.⁷⁴² On 24 September the Campechean newspaper *El Anteojo* published a poem of 36 lines called “Al ciudadano Santiago Imán”. Even though signed by “Un Amigo”, the message of the poem was undoubtedly to persuade Imán to return to Tizimín. The poem presented two models for his consideration: Simón Bolívar, rejected by his own people because of his personal ambitions, and George Washington, loved by all for heading a revolution, but then rejecting the title of dictator or king. The verses ended “Atiene, amigo Imán, y de la historia// las justicieras páginas mirando,// procura meditar profundamente,// y entre los héroes fórmate un dechado.”⁷⁴³ The editors then reminded him that the other liberator, Sebastián López de Llergo, had returned to his own home without any demands. Governor Cosgaya had also declared that while all owed “una eterna gratitud [...] a los campeones y demás obreros que nos han sacado de la opresión y esclavitud” he added firmly that it was time for them to return to the east, “Soldados ilustres de la patria: ya habéis concluida vuestra gran obra.”⁷⁴⁴

It was time for Imán to leave. His army had been dissolved, with the majority of his *campesino* and Maya supporters returning to their lands to plant their fields, the traditional elite had reclaimed their positions, and he was being criticised. His inexperience in public and administrative affairs had allowed the old-time politicians to easily manipulate his cause to their advantage, and to now dispose of the original hero. On 15 October he published his farewell, and assured that he and his 80,000 followers would always be ready to defend Yucatán against “la orgullosa Metrópoli [...] si el despotismo osare amenazarnos, se

⁷⁴¹ *Los Pueblos*, 4 August 1840.

⁷⁴² *Los Pueblos*, 14 July 1840.

⁷⁴³ *Los Pueblos*, 1 October 1840.

⁷⁴⁴ *Recuerdo memorable para heroica Campeche, o sea el 16 de junio de 1840* in *Los Pueblos*, 20 June 1840.

presentará entre vosotros para escarmentar a los traidores.”⁷⁴⁵ Perhaps it was a threat to the Mexicans, or perhaps it was his manner of reminding all what he and his force were capable of. He then disbanded what remained of his forces and returned to Tizimín.

Governor Cosgaya had assured the *pronunciados* of the east that “se trasmita su memoria a las generaciones futuras para que sus nombres se pronuncien con regocijo y placer [...] vuestro nombre será eterno en los anales de la historia de Yucatán, por haber hecho triunfar el voto general y las sagradas causas de la libertad y de la federación.”⁷⁴⁶ This was not to be the case for Imán. He was not a model *pronunciamiento* figure: a *pronunciamiento* in Yucatán was meant to be led by a respected powerful elite military figure who was experienced in politics – preferably from the western cities of Mérida and Campeche – who one could remember with pride. His elite status in Tizimín did not matter in the capital; Meridians simply saw him as some unknown soldier from some small *pueblo* in the east who had somehow been catapulted into the spotlight. In their minds, he had no right to pronounce for any power or causes; that was *their* territory. Imán was to them an embarrassment, and moreover a danger for arming and coopting the *campesinos*, the slaves, and the Maya into a *pronunciamiento*. After trawling through countless newspapers, letters and *impresos*, it is of no coincidence that after Imán’s return to Tizimín in 1840, there was not one reference to his name whenever the heroic *pronunciamiento* of 1840 was mentioned. While Governor Cosgaya had crowed about “las manos diestras y patrióticas que han sabido con acierto escoger los pueblos para el desempeño de los altos poderes públicos,”⁷⁴⁷ the exact opposite had happened to Imán and his demands. He was consciously excluded from collective memory, a figure to be ashamed of, a figure to be forgotten.

Imán was not unaware of this and tried to remain in the public eye. On 22 December 1841 he pronounced in Valladolid condemning the local government for delaying the

⁷⁴⁵ *Enciclopedia Yucatenense*, p.203.

⁷⁴⁶ *Recuerdo Memorable*, 20 June 1840.

⁷⁴⁷ *Exposición que hizo el E.Sr. gobernador*, 20 August 1840.

complete independence of Yucatán (independence which he had initially claimed to be against; this was perhaps an excuse to criticise the government which had pushed him aside), and also asking that those against the current institutions be expelled from the peninsula.⁷⁴⁸ His *pronunciamiento* was ignored, only receiving a small write-up in the paper. The Méndez government subsequently declared Yucatán's independence anyway, even hoisting its own flag, until Mexico decided to return to a federalist system.⁷⁴⁹ In response, the Mexican government declared the closure of the ports of Campeche and Sisal, and all Yucatecan boats as pirates.⁷⁵⁰ A new Yucatecan constitution was then approved in 1842; the nation formed its own bicameral legislature, and was completely in control of its senators, deputies, and governor.

The independence of Yucatán would lead to plans in 1842 for a Mexican invasion of Yucatán by the Santa Anna administration. Imán once more attempted to be included; in 1842, he wrote to the governor offering his services in the imminent war, reminding López that:

V.E y todos los yucatecos son testigos, que fui el primero que despreciando los riesgos, burlando la astucia y vigilancia de nuestros opresores, menospreciando sus amenazas y ofertas, en tiempo que disponía de todos los recursos del Estado, y confiado únicamente en la razón y justicia de nuestra causa, di en el pueblo de Tizimín el grito de libertad en Mayo de 1839, que sostuve por espacio de un año, hasta que felizmente terminó la revolución gloriosa que hizo desaparecer en nuestro suelo el monstruoso y abominable sistema de administración.⁷⁵¹

He then added that “regresé al seno de mi familia, no a disfrutar de los bienes y felicidades que proporcionan el retiro y la vida privada, sino a esperar con noble inquietud el momento feliz de salir nuevamente a la campaña, como ahora se nos prepara.”⁷⁵² He did not enjoy being excluded, that was clear. The government had other intentions for him; Governor Santiago Méndez replied that he would be called on if he was needed, but the local

⁷⁴⁸ *El Yucateco Libre*, 27 November 1841.

⁷⁴⁹ Nelson Reed, *The Caste War of Yucatán* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2001), pp.30-31.

⁷⁵⁰ *El Siglo XIX* (Yucatán), 28 May 1841.

⁷⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 31 August 1841.

⁷⁵² *Ibid.*

administration did not invite him to one single battle during the year-long war against Mexico from 1842-1843. The message was evident: you did the hard work for us, now you need to return to where you came from, and allow yourself to be forgotten.

Despite the determined disregard and blotting out of Imán and the popular demands of his revolt, the *pronunciamiento* of 1840 was consciously to be remembered as a movement by the *pueblos*. Ironically, not one *pronunciamiento* in Yucatán previous to 1838 had ever been of “the people”, but as has been discovered, the iconic symbol of the *pronunciamiento* in celebration and in memory was one which was precisely of the *pueblos*, the people, as they fought against the despotism and tyranny of an oligarchy, or in this case as was claimed, against the “poder tiránico”⁷⁵³ and “el negro pendón de la tiranía”⁷⁵⁴ of the central government. Yucatecans were thus to continually remember the Imán *pronunciamiento* as one fought by the people for their rights, not as an elite act hijacking a popular movement. In the one-year anniversary of the *pronunciamiento*, Yucatecans celebrated the “grito unísono de los yucatecos, que con la rapidez y sublimidad del trueno se produce en todas las extremidades del Estado.”⁷⁵⁵

In the same year, the editors of the newspaper *El Siglo XIX* praised the *pronunciamiento* which had embodied “la irresistible fuerza moral” and “la voluntad general”⁷⁵⁶ of “las masas [...] las secciones populares que en un momento, con asombro suyo, triunfaron unánimes.”⁷⁵⁷ Vice-Governor Miguel Barabachano in 1842 remembered “La sangre de los libres derramada en los campos de Tizimín, Valladolid y Santa Rosa [...] la libertad y los sagrados derechos de los pueblos fueron plenamente reconquistados”,⁷⁵⁸ with

⁷⁵³ *Exposición del ayuntamiento de Espita*, 25 May 1841 in *El Siglo XIX* (Yucatán), 8 June 1841.

⁷⁵⁴ *Discurso que el Excmo. Sr. Vice-Gobernador en ejercicio del supremo poder ejecutivo, D. Miguel Barabachano, pronunció ante las augustas cámaras el día de su apertura*, 1 September 1841, in *El Siglo XIX* (Yucatán), 3 September 1841.

⁷⁵⁵ *El Siglo XIX* (Yucatán), 19 February 1841.

⁷⁵⁶ *Los Pueblos*, 4 April 1840.

⁷⁵⁷ *El Siglo XIX* (Yucatán), 2 April 1841.

⁷⁵⁸ *Discurso que el Excmo. Sr. Vice-gobernador*, 1 September, 1841.

the president of Congress also commending the “admirable revolución [...] de los pueblos.”⁷⁵⁹ The *pronunciados* were proclaimed as “los inmortales autores de nuestra libertad e independencia” and by former Governor Cosgaya as the “héroes que más se han distinguido en el sostenimiento de la causa santa de los pueblos” and the “dueño y señor de todo Yucatán.”⁷⁶⁰

Why ignore Imán and suppress his *pronunciamiento*’s demands, yet memorialise the very same movement as being the prototype of *pronunciamientos* in nineteenth-century Yucatán, i.e. to remember it as being a true popularly-motivated exercise? It is because the true movement of the *pueblos* is what theoretically embodied the *pronunciamiento*; it was supposed to represent the people, their will, their desires, their needs, their rights. Indeed, the actual *derecho de insurrección* against the ruling authorities was justified by the very fact that it was a liberal expression of the *voluntad del pueblo*. It therefore had to be preserved and memorialised as just this in order to be legitimate in memory. Nevertheless, the figure of Imán was embarrassing when compared to the military and political elite who had previously headed *pronunciamientos* in Yucatán: figures such as Sebastián López de Llergo, José Segundo Carvajal and Francisco de Paula Toro. Moreover, to grant Imán and his *campesino* and indigenous followers any success was dangerous: any demonstration of the empowerment of the popular classes would only show them that maybe *they* could pronounce from now on for their demands. Indeed, the inclusion of a Mayan demand in the *pronunciamiento* had been something more than perilous; in 1847 the Mayan protest against taxes would have the suspicious beginnings of a *pronunciamiento*, with extensive planning and liaising occurring. When the Maya were discovered and subsequently executed for their conspiracy, they would retaliate in a revolt which would spiral out of control, becoming the

⁷⁵⁹ *Contestación del Sr. Presidente del Congreso del Estado*, 21 August 1840 in *Los Pueblos*, 22 August 1840.

⁷⁶⁰ *Exposición que hizo el Excmo. Sr. Gobernador*, 20 August 1840.

bloody Mayan rebellion known as the Caste War. This war between Mayas and *criollos* would last from 1847-1853, provoking severe instability in the region.

The participation of the Maya and the popular aspect of the *pronunciamiento* should thus be commemorated, but the *pronunciamiento* itself should not serve the needs of the lower classes. Additionally, its leader who had incited the lower classes to practice insurrection should also be ignored in practice *and* memory. Imán not only lacked in the esteem needed to be praised in *pronunciamiento* memory, but he was also a dangerous figure to be commended for triumphing in his movement, as he had consciously encouraged the Maya to revolt. The Imán *pronunciamiento* would thus simultaneously be remembered as serving the needs of the masses, to uphold its validity in memory, while ignoring the fact that the elite had disregarded the demands of the lower classes. There would also be a conscious attempt by the elites to forget the shameful *pronunciamiento* leader of Imán, who they saw as an undeserving example of a *pronunciamiento* head.

During the next decades, the figure of Imán was slowly forgotten; he disappears from newspaper and correspondence records, only surfacing in contexts of acquiring property or loans. He was also denied playing any role in the Caste War of 1847 -1853, and as records go, he died in 1854, of causes that have not yet been discovered. The memory and figure of Imán, rejected by the Yucatecan elite, did not linger either in his hometown, as by the late 1870s the name of Imán had been forgotten; asked to choose a namesake (a person representative of the legacy of their town) in 1878, the locals opted for Manuel Francisco Mezo, an unremarkable local military officer. No recollections or obituary have been found of Imán, and he has disappeared from collective Yucatecan memory.⁷⁶¹ He, and his *pronunciamiento*, were a lost cause.

⁷⁶¹ Rugeley, *Rebellion now and forever*, p.4.

It is unfortunate that the most significant *pronunciamiento* in Yucatán's history had to be by a man doomed to be rejected by the elite of Yucatán. His movement was evidently the most extraordinary *pronunciamiento* to ever occur in Yucatán; it did not initially arise from the federalist powers in opposition to the centralist government, or from the resentment engendered by harmful economic reforms affecting the wealthy, as had been usually depicted.⁷⁶² The actual initial origins of the Santiago Imán *pronunciamiento* resided in a relatively small faction for a very specific reason: Imán had hardly any workers left, and his soldiers did not want to go to Texas. The Imán movement was thus not – as it has been categorised – one of the many regional *pronunciamientos* which arose as a reaction to the oppressive Bustamante centralist government. The *pronunciamiento* was instead a product of much more intimate and personal concerns. Van Young has proposed the theory that regional (and even national in some cases) conflict in nineteenth-century Mexico was originally sparked by and rooted in more local than large-scale factors.⁷⁶³ Concentration on the “hyper-localist” atmosphere (involving local conflict, attitudes, and actors)⁷⁶⁴ and the micro factors (rather than the macro factors) behind the *pronunciamiento* is essential if one wants to effectively understand not only this *pronunciamiento*, but perhaps the majority of *pronunciamientos* in nineteenth-century Mexico. This would then prevent one from generalizing the *pronunciamiento* as simply a regional reaction to a federalist/centralist government, and instead places the *pronunciamiento* into a more realistic context: with real people, having real (even personal) problems, and choosing this phenomenon as the avenue to do something about it.

⁷⁶² The Yucatecan Creole historians' account of this topic (Serapio Baqueiro, Joaquín Baranda, Juan Francisco Molina Solís and Eligio Ancona) are significantly biased against the centralist government, and tend to heavily denounce the Bustamante administration's political and economic actions, accounting these as the reasons behind the Imán *pronunciamiento*.

⁷⁶³ Van Young, “Of Tempests and Teapots”, p.31.

⁷⁶⁴ Ibid., p.27.

The recruitment of civilian support and the widening of Imán's *pronunciamiento*'s demands were thus mechanisms included to incite support and gain resources and prestige in a revolt which had been constantly failing for years. This explains the many sympathies which come together in the *pronunciamiento* text. The text not only includes the complaints of an indignant military corps, but also contains demands of the federalists, merchants, *hacendados*, and the Maya. The incorporation of civilian demands in Imán's *pronunciamiento* would not only lead to its success, but to its hijacking by greater powers in the capital. A popular movement was turned into an elite *pronunciamiento*, serving the interests of purely the big-time federalists, evading any empowerment of the *pueblos*. The irony here cannot be underestimated: the *pronunciamiento* was initially formed as claiming to serve the rights of the people. Indeed, this liberal element justified its anti-constitutional existence as it overthrew constitutional authorities. The sidelining of the Imán *pronunciamiento* was the exact opposite of what the *pronunciamiento* claimed to be: it erased the *pueblos*' demands and replaced them with an elite agenda. Yucatecans nevertheless strove in future years to remember Imán's movement as the greatest ever *pronunciamiento* in Yucatecan history, one which was started by and served the needs of the people, while simultaneously forgetting its leader and his desires. For the man who had dared to change the history of a region through countless struggles and despite having all the odds stacked against him, it was indeed a sad end; and all because, in the eyes of some, he was not good enough, or too dangerous a role model, to be remembered as a hero.

Conclusion

Through the practice of the *pronunciamiento*, Yucatán came full circle within the space of twenty years, using the exercise to become independent in 1821 from Spain, and then again in 1840 from Mexico. Moreover, as has been demonstrated, every single major political event which took place in the peninsula during this period was realised through, or was a consequence of, a *pronunciamiento*. Evidently, the practice became *the* dominating factor and almost a ritual of local politics; though unconstitutional, it was simply seen as the way to express oneself politically and to engage in local and national politics. After exploring the practice with reference to origins, actors, experience, and even memory, several aspects have been demonstrated about the *pronunciamiento* in Yucatán. It was 1. Not exclusively a military practice for the most part, but a political practice, involving extensive civilian participation, 2. It was moreover a practice of political representation and negotiation, especially with regard to the national context, 3. These *pronunciamientos* demonstrate that Yucatán was much more deeply connected to Mexico than has been previously claimed, 4. Even those Yucatecan *pronunciamientos* which had as their objective the overthrow of local administrations, still had a distinctly ideological character, with factions using the exercise in their attempts to better their economic and political future in Yucatán, and this meant that 5. The *pronunciamiento* was not always a destructive practice, but one which political factions extensively used in their struggle to protect their interests and to construct the political system of the newly-independent region and nation.

This work has shown that it is impossible to deny the role of the military and armed force in instigating and realising Yucatecan *pronunciamientos*. Throughout the period discussed, the threat of violence (and violence itself on several occasions) by the powerful active battalions and the permanent army was the dominant element behind the success of the

Yucatecan *pronunciamiento*. It cannot be disputed, then, that the main actors in the exercise of the *pronunciamiento* were the military. Nevertheless, this should not lead one to classify the *pronunciamiento* as a militaristic practice. As has been illustrated, in nineteenth-century Yucatán – and Mexico – among the most important figures in politics and business were also figures who had been granted military rank. These individuals used their military status to carry out *pronunciamientos* not with militaristic demands, but with political and economic objectives. Additionally, civilians who had no associations with the military (such as merchants and politicians, *campesinos* and even the Maya) also instigated and/or participated in *pronunciamientos* in order to address their own concerns. In the Yucatecan case, the *pronunciamiento* was therefore *not* a militaristic practice whereby the military intervened in political life on the occasion that political institutions could not govern effectively. Although in their *pronunciamientos*, many military officers claimed that this was the case, the fact remains that they themselves were politicians with their own agendas and ideologies, using their military rank to their advantage. The *pronunciamiento* was thus clearly a political exercise more than anything else. Indeed, according to Medina Peña, “En cuanto a objetivos, los miembros del ejército se proponían en cada uno de sus pronunciamientos fines claramente políticos,”⁷⁶⁵ with Guerra stating that, “Solo [...] los cuerpos militares desde la guerra de independencia, poseen simbólicamente la propiedad de la representación política.”⁷⁶⁶ Additionally, it may be over-simplified to classify the *pronunciamiento* as a purely violent practice, equating it with revolts and rebellions. With regard to the Yucatecan *pronunciamientos*, they only resulted in violence in 1834 and 1839; every single other *pronunciamiento* was successful because of the indirect or direct threat of military force. This means that before ever resorting to armed action, *pronunciados* always sought to negotiate forcefully before employing their military advantage.

⁷⁶⁵ Medina Peña, *Invención del sistema*, p.245.

⁷⁶⁶ Guerra, “El pronunciamiento”, p.24.

This attempt at negotiation was most apparent in the national context of the Yucatecan *pronunciamientos*. Throughout the early nineteenth century, the Yucatecan political elite continually used the *pronunciamiento* to directly bargain with the Mexican administration for political change, or to simply support larger *pronunciamientos* in their call for a modification of the Mexican political system. The constant presence of national objectives of the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* heavily imply that Yucatecans felt and were much more politically connected to Mexico than general previous historiography has claimed; indeed the *pronunciamientos* examined in this work demonstrate the enduring and evident connection between Yucatán and the mainland in terms of politics and *pronunciamientos*. As Rugeley has highlighted, there were three main elements of this undeniable connection: firstly, the power and resources of Mexico were so strong (in comparison to Yucatán's) that it was impossible to ignore the political situation there. Additionally, it cannot be denied that many Yucatecans shared the same fundamental concerns with those in "mainland" Mexico, be it federalism, centralism, or the role of the Church. Finally, the need to adhere to national movements and thus provide local *pronunciamientos* with strength, along with a gloss of national ideology and legitimacy was essential for Yucatecan success.⁷⁶⁷

The necessity for Yucatecan *pronunciamientos* to adhere to larger national movements in order to create chances for local *pronunciamiento* success merits further comment. It firstly highlights the weakness of the region when it came to attempting to pronounce for national change solitarily. Indeed, on the two occasions in which Yucatecan *pronunciados* attempted to call for a national change of system on its own (1829 and 1840), it remained stranded in its cause for both cases, with the peninsula ending up being partially separated from Mexico on the first occasion, and completely independent in the second.

⁷⁶⁷ Rugeley, "The Compass Points of Unrest" (in press).

Yucatecan *pronunciamientos* in many instances thus had no choice but to follow the general pattern of Mexican politics, as it was useless for Yucatecan *pronunciados* to hope for support from distant Mexico in their movements. According to the editors of the Yucatecan newspaper *El Constitucional*:

¿Cuándo hizo Yucatán su independencia? Después que la hizo Méjico. ¿Cuándo proclamó su libertad? Después que Méjico. ¿Cuándo aceptó el sistema del año de 24? Después que Méjico. ¿Cuándo se pronunció por el de 36? Después que Méjico. Solo en el año de 1829 se adelantó Yucatán a pronunciarse y establecerse bajo un gobierno central unitario: ¿y qué sucedió? Quedarse solo, porque en Méjico (entiéndase en el resto de la nación) no se adoptó con anterioridad, y al fin en 33 tuvo que restituirse al curso ordinario que seguía la República.⁷⁶⁸

Why were the Yucatecan *pronunciamientos* so weak when it came to attempting to forcefully lobby for national objectives? The principal answer lies in the type of negotiating force which Yucatecans used with the centre. In early independent Mexico, when negotiating with the national administration, the usual type of bargaining power used through a *pronunciamiento* was the threat of – or even outright use in some cases – military force. This had been most evident from the late 1820s through to the 1830s, as military power had been employed in the national-oriented Plans of Iguala (1821) *La Acordada* (1828) and of Veracruz (1832). The use of force nevertheless did not make sense in the Yucatecan context of national lobbying: the region was 1,500 kilometres away from the centre, and it never had any money to maintain its troops anyway. Yucatecan powers therefore attempted to use distance as a beneficial tool rather than a disadvantage: in its *pronunciamientos* of 1821, 1823, 1829 and 1840, *pronunciados* used the *threat* of secession and independence if the national administration did not bow to the region's demands. The fact that these demands were almost always inclined to federalism – and even centralism on two occasions – clearly demonstrated that through the *pronunciamiento*, Yucatecans were looking to unite with Mexico (not separate from it) on favourable terms. Indeed, the *pronunciados* of 1823 really did want to become part of Mexico under a federalist system, not declare Yucatecan

⁷⁶⁸ *El Constitucional*, 6 January 1838.

independence. The centralists of 1829 (with the exception of the *camarilleros* who hijacked their plan) really did want national centralism, not secession. Imán, along with a healthy majority of the Yucatecan politicians, wanted national federalism, not independence. As Vázquez has pointed out, even though there was a “grupo independentista” in Yucatán (the regionalist sector of the *camarilleros*), she rightly states that “la mayoría era federalista y solo resistía las limitaciones al comercio exterior, el control hacendario del centro y, dada su escasa población, el contingente de sangre que exigía el ejército.”⁷⁶⁹ Wells agrees with her, stating:

That some Yucatecan elite politicians advanced the cause of Independence or annexation to the United States [...] reflected their singular political projects and the peculiar constellation of forces at the state and national levels at a given historical moment much more than any deeply felt aversion to *mexicanidad* shared by the majority of the Yucatecan *pueblo*.⁷⁷⁰

Secession was thus meant to be by many as a bargaining tool through the *pronunciamiento*. Only when the attempt of negotiation failed, was when the *pronunciamiento* was turned into an act of disobedience and insubordination. Negotiation was quickly transformed into a type of mutiny when *pronunciados*’ demands were not heard.

The interpretation of secession as a mechanism of negotiation used by a good portion of Yucatecan *pronunciados* nuances the historical interpretation of Yucatán as a pro-independent and regionalist state. While it is true that the relationship between Mexico and Yucatán was rockier than most other regions, and local politicians disagreed with many of the national administration’s policies – especially when it came to trade regulations – it is unfair to classify the peninsula as strictly pro-independent, attempting to secede from Mexico whenever the local powers were displeased (1823, 1829 and 1840). Yucatecans heavily depended on Mexico for economic aid, as well as trade; as a result, every time that Yucatecans threatened independence (1821), or actually seceded (1823, 1829, 1840) from

⁷⁶⁹ Vázquez, “Los años olvidados”, p.323.

⁷⁷⁰ Wells, “Forgotten Chapters”, p.211.

Mexico, they always eventually rejoined the mainland (indeed, subsequent to the Imán *pronunciamiento*, Yucatán would reunite with Mexico once more in 1843). The national administration consequently never bowed to Yucatecan demands, probably knowing that the peninsula's powers would reunite sooner or later with it anyway.

One cannot deny that when the *pronunciamiento* was used locally, more often than not, the *pronunciados*' objective was to overthrow the authorities in power. There was no attempt to bargain at a local level; simply the formality of an announcement that the ruling authorities had to step down and be replaced by the *pronunciados*, with of course military force as the veiled or outright threat. This suggests that the local factor was the more powerful and significant with regard to the Yucatecan *pronunciamiento*; indeed, even when a Yucatecan *pronunciamiento* failed in its national purpose (1829 and 1840), it was *still* proclaimed as a success in Yucatán, as it had accomplished the local objectives of overthrowing the local ruling administrations.

Yucatecan *pronunciamientos* thus demonstrated a severe crisis of constitutionality; respect and obedience to ruling authorities were almost completely absent in the early nineteenth century. In order to reinforce the *pronunciamiento*'s power over constitutional procedures, *pronunciados* never failed to claim that they represented *the people*, embodying *la voluntad del pueblo* against despotic, inefficient and unfair governments. In several cases, this was not hypocrisy; many *pronunciados* did believe that they represented what was best for their homeland, and were just in contesting ruling authorities who were not serving the needs of the people. In the view of Meridian *pronunciado* Felipe de la Cámara in 1839:

¿podrá inculparse justamente a los hombres si propenden a revoluciones y trastornos públicos, en los que, creen encontrar el remedio de sus males y un mejor estar para sus familias? ¡Oh! No, decididamente no, el hombre está en su derecho de reclamar la justicia que le asiste.⁷⁷¹

⁷⁷¹ De la Cámara, *Memorias*, p.37.

This idea is reinforced by the opinion of then-editors of the Yucatecan newspaper *Los Pueblos*, “La soberanía, que es toda del pueblo, se da el derecho de recobrar la autoridad que había conferido a sus magistrados y distribuirla bajo un régimen más ventajoso.”⁷⁷² The *pronunciamiento* was thus seen, in Alfonso Noriega’s words, as a legitimate “derecho de insurrección [...] Los principios de la soberanía del pueblo, de su libertad, de su felicidad y de su propia conservación, son el origen del derecho de insurrección, o bien del de resistencia de la opresión.”⁷⁷³ According to Pani, the *pronunciamiento* was thus “founded on a radical conception of national sovereignty, in which those who spoke for “the people” [...] expressed the sovereign’s will, which was beyond institutional representation and above constitutional law.”⁷⁷⁴

As has been demonstrated with the Yucatecan case, “la voluntad del pueblo” proclaimed in the *pronunciamiento* was not representative of the general sentiment (with the exception of the Imán revolt), but was in fact the embodiment of the ideology of a very specific faction of Yucatecan society: the political and military elite. In this sense, the *pronunciamiento* was used by small, hyperactive, and disaffected elite factions to represent their own political values and intentions, or in the words of Comellas, the *pronunciamiento* was an expression of “el descontento de una minoría.”⁷⁷⁵ It is probable that to some extent, *pronunciados* only included the illusion of serving the needs of the *patria* in their *pronunciamiento* rhetoric in order to make the practice legitimate and acceptable. This was the claim of the editors of the newspaper *El Siglo XIX*; in their words:

Siempre que hay partidos existentes, facciones populares e impotencia de fundar la medida o resolución que se desea, en razones sólidas y en los eternos principios de la equidad y la justicia, se apela a la *opinión pública*: se grita cuanto más a los se puede, *el pueblo quiere esto, el pueblo desea aquello*; y siempre la facción clamoreante se procura identificar con la generalidad del pueblo y programa de la administración, para obtener con seguridad sus miras, o al menos para imponer a los que fueren

⁷⁷² *Los Pueblos*, 7 April 1840.

⁷⁷³ Noriega, *El pensamiento conservador*, p.153.

⁷⁷⁴ Pani, “Intervention and Empire: Politics as Usual?” (in press).

⁷⁷⁵ Comellas, *Los primeros pronunciamientos*, p.31.

contrarios y tienen arbitrio para oponerse a ellos [...] pero vemos con sentimientos que a veces una mínima parte de las asociaciones particulares se atreve a denominarse *pueblo* [...] ¡sirvan de instrumento a pronunciamientos y asonadas provocadas por dos o tres caudillos, con el fin de llevar al cabo sus proyectos! [...] los malvados, inquietos y perniciosos, que con la capa de *vox del pueblo*, *voluntad del pueblo* y *conveniencia pública* se presentan de cuando en cuando a perturbar el orden, trastornar los principios, y dar tristes ejemplos de inmoralidad e insubordinación.⁷⁷⁶

Nevertheless, the *pronunciamientos*' exclusive representation of elite interests and lack of respect for constitutional procedures does not mean that it was not a genuine practice of political representation. On the contrary, it was a manifestation of real political ideologies, and was seen as the most effective way of manifesting one's political views at the time. As Comellas has pointed out, in this sense, the *pronunciamiento* was the way of "*manifestar una opinión, decidirse, tomar partido por alguna cosa*."⁷⁷⁷ It must be kept in mind that it was the elite (and not the lower classes) of Yucatán who were the most politically active, the most educated, and the most associated with the political ideologies permeating through Mexico at the time. Consequently, when they claimed to be representing "the people", it is more than likely that this was not a hypocritical statement, as they *were* representing *their* people (with the obvious exception of the Imán movement). The fact that *pronunciamientos* did really represent political ideologies and beliefs thus challenges the traditional idea that it was simply a method and exercise of tawdry *caudillismo* and power-grabbing. This questions views such as that of nineteenth-century Yucatecan historian Juan Francisco Molina Solís, who claimed with reference to the Liga and the Camarilla, "Los ideales políticos persistían idénticos en ambos partidos y los disociaban solamente afectos personalistas, intereses locales [...] circunstancia que, mermando el espíritu elevado, agriaba las discusiones, convirtiéndolas en rencillas."⁷⁷⁸ His interpretation is overly cynical, and moreover simplistic, as Solís does not grant Yucatecan politics and *pronunciamientos* the serious reading and analysis which they deserve.

⁷⁷⁶ *El Siglo XIX* (Yucatán), 14 January 1842.

⁷⁷⁷ Comellas, *Los primeros pronunciamientos*, p.22.

⁷⁷⁸ Molina Solís, *Historia de Yucatán*, p.245.

Consequently, what should be focused on, is not that *pronunciamientos* produced instability, but that they were used profusely by Yucatecans and Mexicans to cope and govern themselves at a time of weak government, constitutional crisis and institutional disarray. It was a practice seen as the solution not only to represent political beliefs of factions, but also to try and construct the political system of a nation which was newborn, inexperienced, and desperately trying to find the answer which would bring stability and economic progress to its citizens. Yucatecans in particular used the *pronunciamiento* to protect their interests and the economy of their region, while simultaneously trying to form a beneficial relationship with the Mexican administration. The *pronunciamiento* was not just a destabilizing practice, but also represented the efforts of Mexicans in the nineteenth century at political construction and evolution. The nineteenth century was therefore not, as Edmundo O’Gormán claimed, strictly “un espectáculo de indecible tristeza [...] un tedioso rosario de pronunciamientos y de golpes de Estado que no parece mostrar sino la congénita incapacidad de nuestro pueblo para gobernarse y para establecer las bases de una convivencia civilizada.”⁷⁷⁹ It was about groups using the *pronunciamiento* to promote their political ideologies, and to try to achieve social, political and economic progress. Additionally, while one cannot deny that the *pronunciamiento* *did* cause instability, *pronunciados* never allowed Mexico to descend into anarchy or long-term disorder; they always established a new administration in place of the ones which they dismissed.

Finally, what needs to be noted is that in any case, the *pronunciamiento* would not always remain restricted to the elite. The practice gradually became extended to the lower classes, as demonstrated in the final and most significant *pronunciamiento* discussed in this work. Santiago Imán was the very first *pronunciado* to broaden the practice’s popular participation, through appealing to the lower classes, the *campesinos*, and the Maya.

⁷⁷⁹ Edmundo O’ Gorman, “Precedentes y Sentido de la Revolución de Ayutla”, in *Seis estudios históricos de tema mexicano* (Xalapa: Universidad Veracruzana, 1960), p.133.

Yucatecan *pronunciados* throughout the 1840s would capitalise on this idea, continually coopting the Maya into their *pronunciamientos* and insurrections. This signified an unmistakably important development of the practice into a multi-class civilian vehicle of political protest and identity. The cooption of the Maya in the Imán *pronunciamiento* cannot be underestimated with regard to its importance in nineteenth-century Yucatecan history. Imán was the first to overtly include and encourage the Maya in insurrectionary ideology; and the Maya would increasingly become politically active through the *pronunciamiento* into the late 1840s, as *pronunciados* would incorporate them into every major *pronunciamiento* during these years. In 1847, it was consequently only natural for the Maya to think that *they* could now negotiate through insurrection. Indeed, it is highly probable that the Caste War began as a Mayan protest against taxes; not a spontaneous revolt, but as an indigenous *pronunciamiento*, with evidence of extensive planning, conspiracy, and liaising before government authorities discovered them. The execution of a Mayan conspirator would trigger off the Mayan retaliation which would spiral out of control and become the Caste War, an indigenous rebellion which ripped apart Yucatán until the 1850s. *This* was an example of severe instability. For now, the *pronunciamientos* of the period discussed were exercises of elite attempts to mend the political system. It is the historian's duty to give them the fair interpretation which they deserve, as exercises in a time where constitutional procedures were rejected, not only because the *pronunciados* believed that the government always won elections, but because they were devoted to the liberal idea that their political ideologies should be protected and promoted. And one should keep in mind, these were times of confusion and change; *pronunciados* used the *pronunciamiento* in their determined efforts not to create chaos, but to continually try to establish the best political system for the country. As Vázquez has most aptly put it "Y no debe resultarnos raro; eran tiempos de transformaciones, en donde los hombres debían responder a una realidad cambiante. Ellos no

observaban los acontecimientos como nosotros, los vivían, los sufrían y ante todo no los entendían.”⁷⁸⁰

⁷⁸⁰ Josefina Zoraida Vázquez, *Don Antonio López de Santa Anna. Mito y Enigma* (Mexico City: CONDUMEX, 1987), p.13.

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